Week ending December 10 1949 Every Thursday Threepence

John Bull

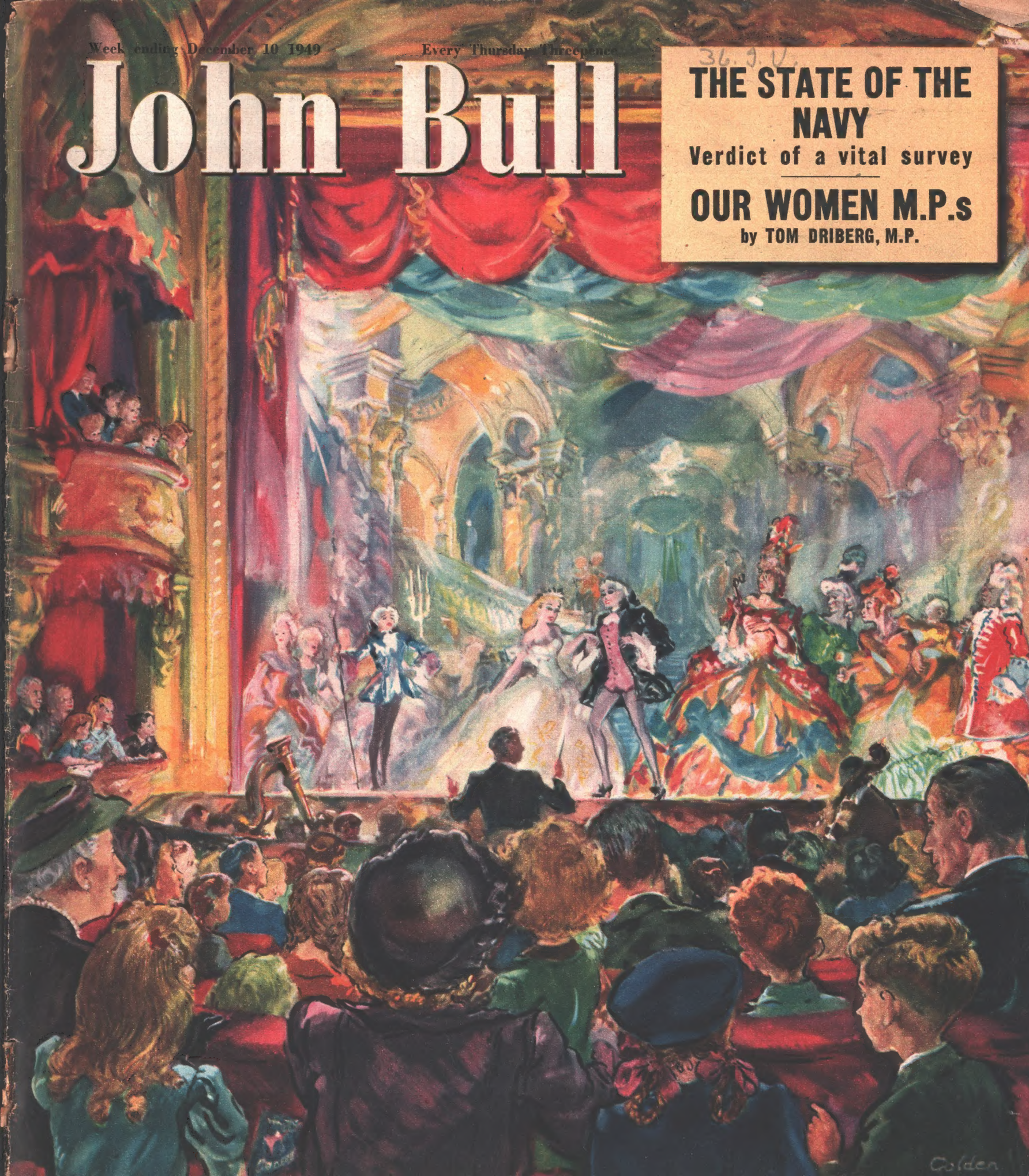
36. J. U.

THE STATE OF THE NAVY

Verdict of a vital survey

OUR WOMEN M.P.s

by TOM DRIBERG, M.P.



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says Christopher Stone

I HAVE just been down to the Bush London factory. I found everyone there in high spirits, but considerably overwhelmed by the number of orders placed by Bush dealers since Radiolympia.

From what I saw, there is no doubt that Bush are making a tremendous effort to fill orders promptly, but I think I should give you this tip.

It may be that your Bush dealer is temporarily out of stock of the particular model on which you have set your heart. If so, I assure you it will be well worth while to wait a few days for delivery. You can bank on Bush and their dealers, like the sets they sell, not to let you down.

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De Luxe **RAZOR SET**

AN IDEAL XMAS GIFT

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And no wonder—with an Ever-Ready Razor fitted with Ever-Ready Corrux Blades he is certain of perfect speedy shaving every morning of his life.
Remember there are no loose parts to annoy during the early morning rush. Just a flick—and the Ever-Ready Razor is ready for shaving or cleaning.

Ever-Ready de luxe SET

with 6 Ever-Ready

CORRUX Blades

Ever-Ready

ONE PIECE *Snap-Action* RAZOR

WITH THE MARVELLOUS Ever-Ready CORRUX Blade

COMPLETE TAX PAID **5/3**

OTHER ITEMS IN THE EVER-READY XMAS GIFT RANGE

Ever-Ready Strop Outfit 21/-; Ever-Ready Safety Lock Ambassador Set 12/6; Ever-Ready Streamline Set 10/-; Ever-Ready Shaving Brushes. Ask your dealer to show you them.

EDITORIAL

Stop the short-weight tricksters

NEARLY 7,000 WEIGHING and measuring appliances used by shop and street traders in the London area are now condemned annually by County Council inspectors, compared with only a little over 2,000 a few years ago.

This is just one instance of a growing dishonesty which ought to be sternly checked before it gets any worse. The minority of petty crooks among shopkeepers, publicans, stallholders and barrow-boys seems to have more than trebled since the war.

What are the reasons? One is undoubtedly the increased temptation to cheat which has been brought about by shortages. An unscrupulous trader who can chisel a trifle here and there off his customers' rations builds up a surplus stock to sell at an inflated price in the black market. And a publican who can today adopt a take-it-or-leave-it attitude about such scarce drinks as whisky gets away more easily with short measure.

The fact that many of these mean little robberies—for such tricks constitute both theft and fraud—cause unnecessary hardship and loss to housewives who already have much to contend with, does not deter the tricksters in the slightest.

Only efficient and ruthless punishment by the law could do that—and the law, alas, is as full of loopholes as a colander.

Latest Home Office figures show an average of four convictions under the Weights and Measures Acts every day of the year. But if the law was drastically tightened and enforced, that number would no doubt be multiplied at least ten times. And after a few months the dishonest section of the trading community would realize that its dirty game was not worth while.

MEANTIME weights and measures inspectors, who carry on a patient, ceaseless war against roguery, are handicapped by a patchwork and inadequate set of regulations under a series of obsolete laws, the first of which was passed in 1878.

Since then there have been sixteen new Acts and revisions. What the people who have to try to enforce them think was expressed by a London magistrate. He described the Sale of Food (Weights and Measures) Act of 1926 as "queer, extraordinary, remarkable and idiotic."

Yet it is taking a Board of Trade committee of experts, under the chairmanship of Sir Frank Hodgson, a long time to decide how best to straighten out the muddle.

The committee is investigating how to apply the existing laws more effectively, and whether they should be extended to protect the consumers of a wider range of goods. It first met more than a year ago, and was expected to report last October. But the job is taking so long that we may not get even an interim report before Christmas.

The truth is that so much evidence of short weight and short measure frauds is coming to light that the committee finds its task unexpectedly formidable. No one wants it to scamp its work—but there is understandable impatience in places where the public is being particularly ill-used.

SOME local authorities have decided not to wait any longer. At Salford the Weights and Measures Department has equipped a motor-van with instruments capable of weighing anything from a packet of sweets to a bag of coal. Housewives are urged to summon this van to any shop which they suspect of giving them short measure. No better deterrent can be imagined than such a semi-public, on-the-spot check with the certainty of prosecution to follow a disclosure of fraud.

Tonypandy, Glamorgan, has set up a Fair Deal Committee with premises where shoppers can take doubtful purchases to be check-weighed.

This kind of direct action is valuable in an emergency, but it is no permanent substitute for an efficient law backed by adequate penalties and an all-pervading system of inspection. That is something which honest traders need not resent—and they can protect themselves further by co-operating to root out the crooks.

For short weight and short measure dealings have been revealed all along the line, from luxury shops to street barrows. Milk, beer, spirits and disinfectants, for example, have been found in short measure; groceries, meat, fruit, wool, coal and coke and wood in short weight.

Short weight scandals by unscrupulous coal merchants have been reported from places as far apart as Stratford, Paddington, Aberdeen and Oldham. One delivery charged as two tons was 18 cwt. short—nearly half!

The fact must be faced that some traders regard giving short weight and short measure as somehow being a legitimate business device. They would not dream of going out at night and committing a burglary, but their twisted code of conduct nevertheless allows them to do something just as dishonest and even more mean.

The Hodgson Committee must hurry up with its recommendations, which should certainly plump for strengthening both of the law and of the powers and procedure of inspection.

JOHN BULL 189 HIGH HOLBORN LONDON W.C.1
DECEMBER 10, 1949 VOLUME 86 NUMBER 2267 PHONE: TEMPLE BAR 2468 GRAMS: HEROICALLY, WESTCENT, LONDON

You're only *half-enjoying* ice cream until you taste

Wall's ICE CREAM

Sally says: "It's lovely when we have Wall's at home. I like it best with hot puddings, but we have it lots of different ways, sometimes with fruit or jam, sometimes by itself. Mum likes it too — she says it's so easy, and a real food for wintertime."

WE GUARANTEE
that all ICE CREAM of our manufacture is PURE, that it has been properly PASTEURISED and complies in every respect with all regulations pertaining to the PURITY OF FOODS
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ICE CREAM
IS SAFE ICE CREAM

MORE THAN A TREAT – *a food!*

T. WALL & SONS LTD., LONDON, MANCHESTER, EDINBURGH ICE 109-112

Nicholson Gin – too good to drown

GIVE AND TAKE NICHOLSON THIS CHRISTMAS

A Christmas present you can well afford

"*JUST* what I wanted" . . . that's how your friends will welcome your gift of a lovely HYGEX rubber-cushioned hairbrush! These beautiful brushes, with their deep, penetrating nylon, bristle or wire, are available—in a really exciting choice of charming colours—**FROM 5s. to 17s. 6d.** There are Hygex hairbrushes for men too; Hygex sterilised shaving brushes cost 3s. 9d. to 55s.

GOOD BRUSHES ARE STAMPED— Hygex

THE BRUSHES FOR HEALTHIER HAIR

Santa Says Scroll

To Philip With Love Monica

ONLY EARLY BIRDS GET SCROLLS

Do you know *anybody* who wouldn't like a Scroll Ball Pen for Christmas (not forgetting yourself)? *Everybody* wants these smooth gliding, long writing, trouble free pens.
There's a choice of gay plastic colours, filled with standard blue ink, at 5/- only and Refills are obtainable in BLUE, RED or GREEN ink for 1/11. To make your gift *Super*-de-luxe, give a Refill with a pen.
At all Stationers.

5/-

BALL PEN

Scroll

Made by Scrib Ltd., London, S.W.19

Free Speech

WHY WE ARE SHORT OF POLICE

I WAS ONE OF 40,000 war reserve constables and spent nearly three years in the Sheffield city police. While agreeing with the title of your Editorial "The Man on the Beat is the Best Deterrent" (JOHN BULL, November 26), I can assure you that pay and housing shortages have little to do with the lack of police recruits. The main trouble is the system.

As a policeman, I was treated as a potential criminal. I worked the "discretionary route" or "box" system, whereby each man gives his chosen points to the telephone operator from box "A" and patrols through such points, one every twenty minutes, to box "B." Then off again, subject to the half-hour meal interval.

The box system has certain advantages, notably that an officer is quickly missed from his beat. But it is also the basis of police supervision.

Sergeants, and even inspectors, having found out where a man should be, choose some spot where they cannot be seen and watch for their man—watch to see if he *does* come and how long he stays, whether he dares to speak to his colleague on the next beat, whether he has a "calling place," and if he goes to his next point by the correct route. And, of course, to see that the regulation two minutes for telephoning and half-hour for a meal are not exceeded.

If the policeman commits any of these crimes, he is for it: a verbal "wigging" or a stiff fine, with in either case a spell on the most inconvenient beat.

Off duty, he is just as much subject to this discipline for the sake of discipline. He may not be too frequent a visitor to the local inn. Outside London, he may not be a member of any non-police organization, such as a working men's club.

If the authorities everywhere were induced to change their policy and humanize the force it could be made into a good life and a fine career. Cut out the supervision by persecution which would not be tolerated in industry and is old-fashioned in the Army. Until that is done, the beats will still be unmanned.—PETER COLLINS, Station House, Barnham, Thetford, Norfolk.

Saboteurs Of Love

THREE YEARS OF COURTSHIP have convinced me that most people are out to wreck lovers' happiness. Friends miss your company and try to excite your envy with stories of good times they have had. Married men recount the horrors of marriage. Relatives delight in exposing your bad points in semi-humorous vein. Single women meet your girl friend's happiness with "No man for me" talk.

To save my dreams from wreckage, I intend to retreat into marriage as soon as possible. Never, as I long as I live, will I try to detract from the bliss of a young couple in love.—A. R., Sheffield.

Religion And Cruelty

WRITING ON "The Mystery of the Bible Boom" (JOHN BULL, November 12), the Rev. W. E. Purcell mentioned the low level of interest among younger age groups. I am middle-aged now, and I blame my parents' generation for this. When I was young I was stuffed with readings from the Bible and if I committed some trifling offence I was sent to my room to learn Psalm 119 as a punishment.

As a result I never read the Bible and my daughter, now twenty, was not sent to church or Sunday school, although she goes to church sometimes.

I think the older religious ideas made people hypocritical and cruel, which you don't find very often in young people today.—MRS. ROBERT SMYTH, Ingle-Neuk, Ballylenaghan, Newtownbreda, Belfast.

Psalm 119, beginning "Blessed are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the Lord," contains 2,466 words.

The "Perfect" Film

RECENTLY IN A LOCAL CINEMA I saw the very old film, *Tawny Pipit*, filmed in the warm, genuine atmosphere of the Oxfordshire Cotswolds. It was perfect—wonderful moments of humour and pathos, devoid of all cheap sentimentality. When the lights came on it was amazing to see the whole audience smiling with a feeling of goodwill.

We could do with more films like this,

Jean Gillie in "Tawny Pipit"

surely made much more cheaply than many recent failures.—MISS C. M. TEAR, 49 Lytton Avenue, Penn, Wolverhampton.

Wilfred's Signature Tune

GRATEFUL THANKS from my husband and me for the privilege of reading the life story of Wilfred Pickles in JOHN BULL. None could fail to be moved by this mixture of humour, pathos, courage and genuine straight-from-the-shoulder talk.—MRS. D. BULLOCK, 2 Moran Road, Macclesfield, Cheshire.

. . . Listening to Wilfred's *Have a Go!* programme, I have often tried to catch the words of the signature song beginning "Have a Go, Joe." What are they?—A. L. PARSONS, Tytherley, Newcastle Road, Crossgate Moor, Durham City.

The words are:
Have a go, Joe, come on and have a go,
You can't lose out, it costs you nowt, to make yourself some dough.
So hurry up and join us, don't be shy and don't be slow,
Come on, Joe, have a go.

Not A Comic Opera

AS A MEMBER of the Young Communist League, I should like to reply to Douglas Hyde's article on the work of the League (JOHN BULL, November 12). Its work is not confined to politics and includes many varied social activities.

No doubt this will disappoint those who believe that we plot civil wars, brutalize our features by becoming Marxists and enslave and corrupt innocent youth. We are not comic opera underground conspirators. We are a militant, fighting youth organization and we have nothing to hide.—DENNIS HILL, 34 Whippingham Road, Brighton.

John Bull welcomes readers' views, experiences and ideas for publication. A guinea is paid for every letter used. Mark the envelope "Free Speech" and make sure your full name and address is in the letter

TOOTAL TIES have everything

For formality at the office, or colour at week-ends, there's every style in the enormous Tootal range—plain shades, dots, stripes, paisleys, checks. And how they wear! Every tie is made in fabric marked "TEBILIZED" for tested crease-resistance; and the colours stay bright through repeated washings. Why not see for yourself?

TOOTAL TIES

2/9 Popular Standard **3/6** & Sports **5/-** Special

All prices include Purchase Tax. 'Tootal' and 'Tebilized' are Registered Trade Marks
TOOTAL BROADHURST LEE CO. LTD. 56 OXFORD STREET, MANCHESTER, 1

FOR SENSITIVITY, tonal quality, and trouble-free service, this new Ferguson 259A Model makes Radio history as sheer value for money. 5-valve three waveband superhet for A.C. mains; 8" speaker; switched extension speaker and pick-up sockets. Tone control. 3½ watts undistorted output. Polished walnut cabinet. Ask your Ferguson dealer for a demonstration.

F.35F

20 GNS *Tax Paid*

Fine sets these FERGUSON's

POST NOW TO THORN ELECTRICAL INDUSTRIES 105-169, Judd Street, London, WC1
Please send me details of the new range of Ferguson Models :—

NAME .....

ADDRESS ..... J.B.2.

Oral SHOES

An attractive Gibson shoe with stitched platform and crepe sole

Speak for themselves!

'Oral' — Maker of good shoes — Rushden, Northants

"Why I prefer oven-cooking"

by Patricia Seymour

I ALWAYS cook as many things as possible in the oven whenever I have it going. Oven-cooking is the easiest thing in the world—that is, if you have 'Pyrex' brand oven glassware to help you.

This glass ovenware retains the heat, so you get an even-all-through tender cooking—the full flavour and natural juices are all held in. And you take the dish *straight* to the table, where it looks *lovely*. Washing-up is so easy, too, with no sticky saucepans to wash. 'Pyrex' brand ovenware is *invaluable* to *every* housewife.

Three dishes in one! Lid of 'Pyrex' brand casserole makes another dish. 1¾ pint size, 6/-.

Perfect for milk puddings and fruit pies, this 'Pyrex' brand pie-dish. 1¼ pint size, 3/6.

REGD. TRADE MARK **'PYREX'** BRAND **OVEN-TO-TABLE GLASSWARE**

All 'Pyrex' brand ovenware carries a 12 months' free replacement guarantee against breakage by oven-heat. It is made by James A. Jobling & Co. Ltd., Wear Glass Works, Sunderland.

There is Comfort in this Room

cindrella CURLY PILE **rugs**

make for comfort! By fireside and bedside, their deep, curly pile of pure mohair is warm, comforting, luxurious; and their rich colours are always lovely to see.

Oblong, Bow and Oval. All popular sizes. 15 colours. Obtainable from most furnishers and stores.

Enough to tempt a saint— even Santa!

Mackintosh's 'Quality Street'

A DELICIOUS ASSORTMENT OF TOFFEES & CHOCOLATES

COAL HANDLING PLANT
Coal arrives by rail, canal or river. It is then unloaded and carried to the boiler bunkers, or reserve store, by huge conveyors, at the rate of 200 or more tons an hour.

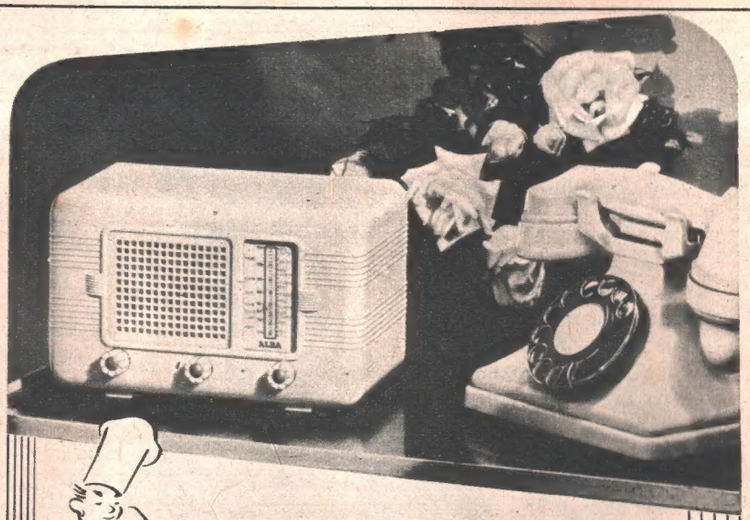
more power

→ AND WHAT IT MEANS FOR YOU

SOME OF BRITAIN'S new Power Stations will consume up to 20,000 tons of coal every week. Most of this coal is of low-grade quality unsuitable for other purposes.

Britain now consumes twice as much electricity as in 1938, and burned nearly 30,000,000 tons of coal for electricity production in 1948. To end power cuts in the factories and in your home, British Electricity are building 38 new Power Stations and are installing new plant in 43 existing Stations.

BRITISH ELECTRICITY



Pat-a-cake, pat-a-cake, Radio Man,
Give me an Alba as quick as you can,
The smallest all-wave I ever did know,
I'll take it and use it wherever I go!

Unique amongst baby sets this Alba is ALL-WAVE, has its own aerial and goes wherever there's an electric point. Supplied in ivory or a choice of beautiful pastel shades to match your bedroom, kitchen or guestroom.
Ask your local radio dealer to show you Alba C112
The ideal gift to your family

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FREE!
Write for colour chart and also Catalogue of complete Alba range, radio and T/V. Made by the people whose experience in musical reproduction dates from the earliest gramophone days.

ALBA
Radio of Quality

ALBA RADIO (Dept. J.B.5) 52-58, Tabernacle St. London, E.C.2

Mother . . . .
protect young teeth against mouth acid!

Here's a way to protect young teeth against the damage often caused by mouth acidity. Many foods and sweets produce acids which soon attack the delicate enamel if not checked in time.

To correct this mouth acidity, many dentists advise *'Milk of Magnesia', contained only in one toothpaste — PHILLIPS' Dental Magnesia.

Its mild, delightful flavour makes children eager to use it regularly—forming a habit which is the best safeguard during these early, important years.

Phillips' DENTAL MAGNESIA Toothpaste
Regd.

** 'Milk of Magnesia' is the trade mark of Phillips' preparation of magnesia.*

"Getting dirty is all part of the game to a boy!" *says Mum*

Happily Mum knows how to deal with dirt. She makes sure that both the dirt and the germs it contains are washed away with Lifebuoy. For Lifebuoy has an antiseptic action that looks after health upstairs, downstairs, at the sink, *wherever* it's used!

LIFEBUOY
more than a GOOD soap
—a good habit
because it's an extra health protection
A *LEVER* PRODUCT

L.477-1160

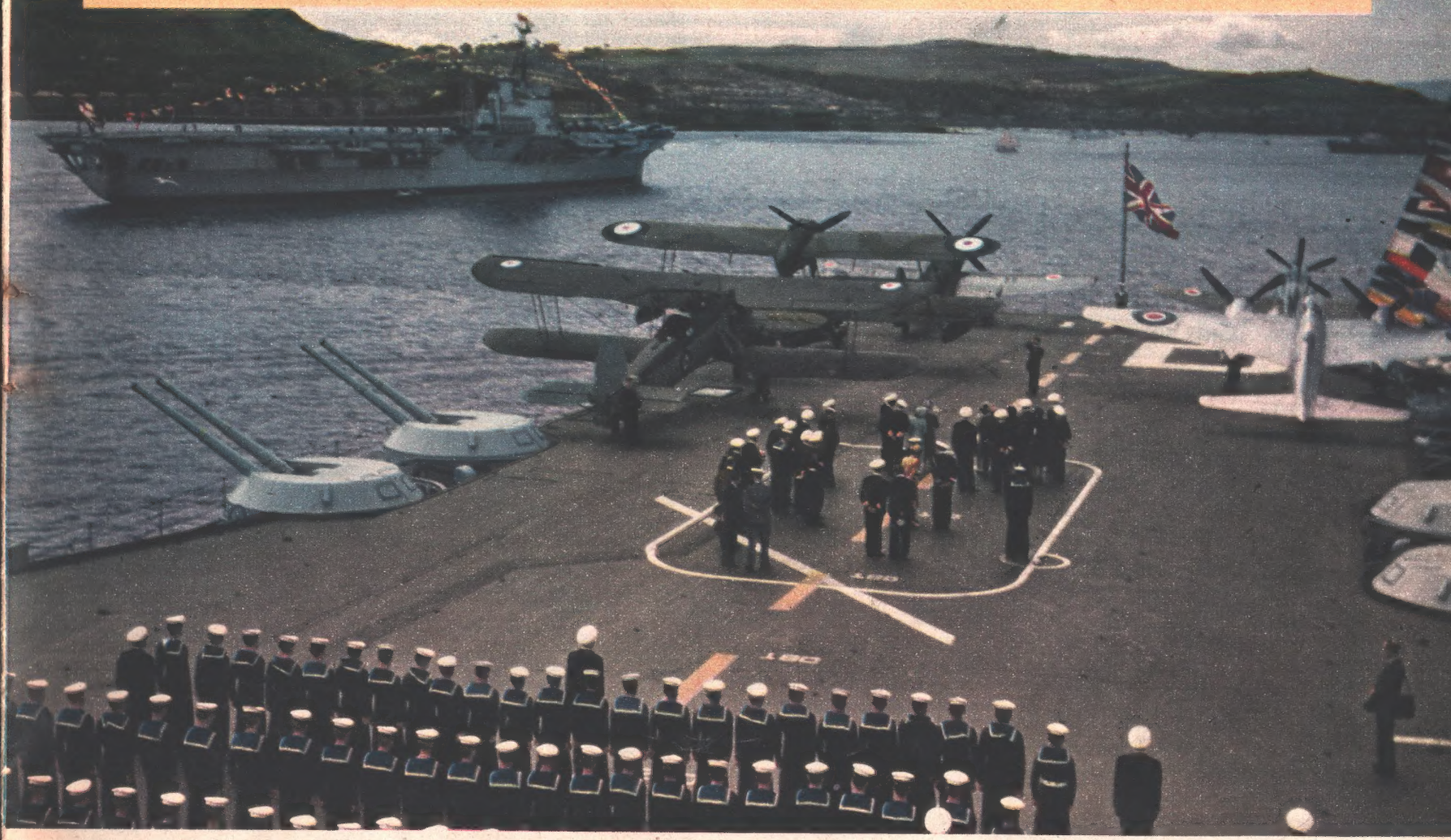
".. a credit to you on BENBOW'S!"

It's a joy to behold a lively, healthy dog. Benbow's is not a harsh purgative, but a tonic rich in the oils and vitamins a dog needs to keep him bubbling over with health, good nature and vitality. Your dog reflects your personality—see that he gets what he needs to keep him well.

In bottles, cans and capsules from pet shops, corn stores, and chemists

BENBOW'S
DOG MIXTURE

THE STATE OF THE NAVY . . . *An important John Bull survey*



Inspection time on the aircraft carrier *Illustrious*. With one third of its men in aviation, the British Navy is the most air-conscious in the world

Sailor who re-enlisted

by IAN BEVAN

How are the Royal Navy's sails being trimmed to the conditions of 1949? What is being done about scientific research? What sort of career—forget recruiting posters—can the Navy really offer? John Bull asked Ian Bevan to find the answers to these vital national questions

"THE WONDER IS ALWAYS new that any sane man can be a sailor." An American, Ralph Waldo Emerson, said that about the English almost a hundred years ago, and here, for those who still share his wonder, is the story of one sane Englishman and the navy to which he belongs.

Engineroom Artificer Geoff Sims, twenty-two and ambitious, was inclined to agree with Emerson when he was demobbed from His Majesty's Navy in November, 1946, and began the grand adventure he had been thinking about for four years: life in civvy street.

At last he was free to go where he liked, do what he pleased, and make as much money as he could. He married a sweet girl, found a good job and managed to rent a six-room council house at a price he could afford.

But a couple of months ago Geoff turned his back on civvy street and re-enlisted. He and his wife had looked at things from all angles and decided the Navy offered more opportunities, greater security, and—in every way except one—a better life.

What was the one drawback? The old one of separation. Even the Admiralty's own recruiting pamphlet is candid on this point. "When you come to consider the factor of family life," it says, "the arguments are not on the side of the Navy. Frequent separation is an unpleasantness that has to be faced."

Geoff and his wife Sylvia have been married just over three years, have a baby boy, and frankly do not look forward to being away from each other for months, sometimes even years, on end.

But they have hopes that one day the Navy will be able to offer them married quarters on home stations. If Geoff goes abroad, Sylvia would like to follow. Her sister and a sister-in-law are both in Germany with Servicemen husbands; another sister-in-law came back the other day from a long spell in Singapore with her husband, who is a squadron leader in the R.A.F. They have found life abroad great fun, so Sylvia (who used to be a bus conductress on £3 a week) is anxious to try it.

On the economic side, Geoff says he finds everything in favour of the Navy. As an E.R.A., acting 4th class, he can make his wife's allowance of £2 9s. a week up to £5, allot another 10s. a week to a Naval tailor (the same thing as saving for clothes) and still have about 25s. a week for himself.

That is much more spending money than he could

ever have when he was earning between £6 and £7 a week on piecework as a turner in a factory at Grantham. His wife, who pays 24s. 9d. a week rent, is better off feeding two on £5 than she was with three on £5 6s. which was all they could afford for housekeeping before.

Geoff says the past three years have brought quite a change in barrack-room talk. When he was demobbed, all the boys were complaining about pay. Now the most frequent "drips" are food and quarters, particularly quarters. Most of the chaps, he says, agree that Service pay is not too bad, especially if they have had recent experience of civilian wages.

Britain's most distinguished trouble shooter, Lord Louis Mountbatten, who comes home from Malta early in the New Year to join the Board as Fourth Sea Lord, responsible among other things for pay, can look forward to a job which on that score is almost free of trouble.

With his technical abilities, Geoff has a reasonable chance of earning promotion which will more than double his present rate of pay before his eight-year term of enlistment is up in 1957. In the factory, the best he could have hoped for would have been a foreman's job at £7 10s. a week.

He is a qualified tradesman, but his case is fairly typical and explains why about 5,000 young ex-Naval men have tried to re-enlist this year, and why the Navy is without any serious recruiting problem. Seen from his angle, it is not such a wonder after all why sane men are sailors.

Shore Lure Is Dimmed

The natural postwar reaction against Service life seems to be ending; the bright lure of shore jobs has been dimmed by high taxation and talk of insecurity. The Lords of the Admiralty—eleven of them, drawing £38,000 a year—have many worries but, for the first time since 1939, finding men to man the ships is not one of them.

Providing the ships for the men is, of course, another matter. Naval estimates have been cut sharply in postwar years (from £713,630,000 for 1945-46 to £189,250,000 for 1949-50). The Navy this year has about £18,000,000 less to spend than the Air Force, and £115,500,000 less than the Army.

The only way to save money in the Navy is to cut down on the number of sea-going ships. Britain today does not keep one battleship in full commission. The active fleet includes five carriers, fifteen cruisers, thirty-three destroyers, twenty-three frigates and thirty submarines.

The Americans, on the other hand, have an active fleet of one battleship, nineteen carriers, eighteen cruisers, 170 destroyers and eighty submarines. The Russians keep quiet about the size of their navy, but they are reported to have in commission one battleship, one carrier, eleven cruisers, forty-eight destroyers and about 200 submarines.

Admiral Conolly, commander of the U.S. Eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean Fleet (who has his headquarters in a block of flats in London's Grosvenor Square and is in closest possible liaison with the Admiralty) referred in America recently to our "scant remaining Naval forces" and said: "Reliance on Britain for control of the seas is now visionary."

At the Admiralty they don't think things are quite as bad as that. After all, Admiral Conolly was trying to persuade his House of Representatives to give the American Navy more money. But they do agree that they have comparatively little butter to spread on a very large slice of bread.

Diminished though our Navy is, jobs remain for it to do throughout the seven seas. The active fleet is split into six commands: the Home, Mediterranean and Far East fleets, and the East Indies, South Atlantic, and America and West Indies squadrons. Of these, only the Home and Mediterranean fleets are of significant operational strength.

No one, however, could expect Britain to maintain her Navy at anything approaching wartime size. The U.S. Navy is about three times as big as the Royal Navy but then there are about three times as many Americans to pay the bill.

Even the most ardent advocate of Naval strength to be found within hail of Admiralty Arch admits that the sails of our peacetime Navy must be trimmed to the chill winds of the economic crisis.

So the Navy has accepted cuts with good grace and will take further cuts next year. It has also accepted the fact that it gets the smallest share of what is available for the Services: one in every six of the men, and less than a quarter of the defence budget.

What the Navy lacks in quantity it tries to make up in quality. It has set the highest recruiting standards in the Services and only one in five of those who try to follow Geoff Sims along the path of re-enlistment is accepted. Enough ships are kept in commission to carry out the peacetime jobs of "showing the flag" and policing world trade routes, but the tasks on which the Navy concentrates are research and training.

Neither of these is a job which calls for hundreds of ships. The Sea Lords are far less worried by the small number of ships in commission than some members of the public and Admiral Conolly seem to be.

Research projects on which, as the First Lord has said, "the maintenance of the traditional efficiency of the Royal Navy so largely depends," employ about 1,500 scientific workers, cost more than £7,000,000 a year, and are so important that they will be described fully in a further article.

Training is the Navy's number one priority. The able seaman of today might be the chief petty officer of tomorrow, the sub-lieutenant might be the captain. In fact the contrast can be even more marked, for the official aim is that at least one in every four Naval officers of the future should have qualified from the lower deck.

Although the Navy has the name of being the most privilege-ridden and snobbish of the Services, for many years there has been no final barrier other than personal ability between the ranks of seaman boy 2nd class and admiral of the fleet.

Vice-Admiral Sir Benjamin Martin and Rear-Admiral Enright both made the grade from seaman boy, and Engineer-Admiral Frew started as an artificer apprentice. The last citadel of Naval privilege, Dartmouth College, fell to the democratic demands of free education in 1948, since when it has been possible for the son of poor parents to qualify there without costing his family a penny.

Training and research are the two things which, carried out thoroughly in peace, should allow the Navy to expand rapidly and efficiently in war. The trained men would be ready to lead and instruct the mobilized reserves and national servicemen; the scientists would have their blueprints made for the workmen to build new ships and weapons.

Reserve Fills The Gap

There is an obvious and dangerous gap in this reasoning . . . it must take time before new ships can be built. This gap is covered, in present R.N. planning, by the reserve fleet which has never existed before in British Naval history on such a scale or at such a high pitch of readiness.

The reserve fleet and training squadron between them have about 350 ships, or almost three times as many as the active fleet. The training squadron, which includes the battleship *Vanguard* and the fleet carrier *Victorious*, is sea-going and could provide the nucleus of a battle fleet or task force at short notice.

The reserve fleet used to be considered, with some reason, a collection of old junk which nobody quite had the heart to sink. But the reserve fleet of today consists, with very few exceptions, of ships which have been completed since 1939 and could be made operational within a matter of weeks or, at the most, months.

Indeed, the ships often are made operational at short notice. When a ship of the active fleet returns for refit, it is replaced by a vessel from the reserve so that, for many of the bigger class ships, there is a continuous cycle of active and reserve service.

Valuable armaments, radar equipment and navigational aids on reserve ships are protected by new-style plastic coverings, sprayed on, which keep them in good condition for years.

So the Royal Navy, although it ranks second and possibly even third in terms of manpower and ships in commission, does not necessarily rank second or third in terms of potential striking force. The worst that can be said is that Britain's is no longer the only important navy in the world.

One-third Are Airmen

Despite its reputation for being slow to accept new ideas, it has become possibly the most air-conscious navy in the world, and approximately one-third of its officers and men are employed, directly or indirectly, in Naval aviation.

Two incidental jobs, which the R.N. has taken in its stride for years, are charting the oceans of the world and protecting the fishing grounds of the British Isles.

Naval surveys began more than 150 years ago, and many of the charts of the Pacific are still based on original soundings made for the Admiralty by Captain Cook in the eighteenth century.

This is one aspect of Naval activity where, instead of always spending money, it sometimes makes a bit. Government departments, merchant shipping lines, yachtsmen and the

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NEW SERIAL by GERALD KERSH

NEXT WEEK, JOHN BULL starts serialization of Gerald Kersh's latest novel, *Jack of Swords*—a roistering adventure story set in Napoleonic Paris.

The hero of the story, Jacques Ratapoil, is a giant-killer on the grand scale. With lovely Louise at his side, he takes part in a desperate game of violence and intrigue. . . .

One of the most brilliant and forceful storytellers of this decade, Gerald Kersh was born in 1908 of Russo-Polish parents at Thames-side Teddington. He published his first book when twenty-four. Then followed the powerful short stories that made his name.

When the war started he joined the Coldstream Guards and wrote his famous *They Die with Their Boots Clean* and *The Nine Lives of Bill Nelson*.

Today he spends most of his time between England, Canada and Barbadoes. He is six feet tall, a crack shot and, in the Army, was

acknowledged to be the strongest man in his regiment.

The first full-length instalment of Kersh's absorbing new story, *Jack of Swords*, appears . . . .

in John Bull next week

Four of the keepers shouldered their guns and tramped away. The boy felt a cold dread settling on him. In a few minutes, the shoot would begin

The Changing World

by JOHN LUKENS

ILLUSTRATED BY RONALD LAMPITT

Frantically, the wounded deer tried to get up. But there was no escape. The boy knew what he had to do

THE LITTLE HILL LOOKED down on an enchanted world. More than ever now, two days after his thirteenth birthday, the boy was aware of the magic it had always held for him. He did not know why his feeling for it this early winter evening was suddenly so full and strong. But he did not question it. He accepted it now as he had accepted everything the hill had given him.

For almost as long as he could remember it had been his world, peopled only by the creatures he loved; the proud-antlered bucks and their mild-eyed does, the rabbits with their scampering runs and eager twitching noses, the robins and woodpeckers and the lone curlew with his haunting, unfinished song. He knew them all.

He had found the crushed hollows among the tall fern where the deer had slept the night before; he had seen the young fawns' coats darken in the hot summer; he had brought pockets full of bread for the silent birds when the ground was hidden under snow.

Down from the little hill this great bay of tree- and heather-covered land swept out: it was his world, bounded in the distance by the fir trees, green and motionless against the ever-changing sky.

The boy remembered the firewood he had been sent out to collect, and he sighed. Soon it would be dark. The wind was turning to the north and rising a little; it would be colder tomorrow.

Again, suddenly, he was aware of the intensity of his feeling. He looked at the holly trees, and their berries were startling as tiny clustered drops of blood among the dark-green leaves.

He turned away from the hill and began to fill his sack with driftwood. Then he trudged back into the forest enclosure and along the gravelled track that led to his other home.

The small cottage of weathered brick stood alone to one side of the track. In the half-acre field behind it that was roughly fenced with stakes and sagging wire, a cow munched disconsolately at the poor grass, indifferent to the hens that picked and gossiped about its feet.

A short, powerfully built man stood outside the back door, looking up at the sky. His keeper's jacket with its green cuffs and lapels had the loose comfort of long wear, and his breeches belonged inevitably to the thick, slightly bowed legs. His round face with its snuff-stained, drooping moustache had something of the mournful simplicity of a seal as he sniffed the damp air. He grunted.

"More rain."

The boy nodded and dumped the sack of wood against the wall. At the bottom of the small vegetable plot an old hound was tethered to a wooden box. She kept tugging at the leash and whining a little.

"Keenest bitch ever I know'd," the man said. "The air's full of deer." He grinned and called: "Tomorrow, girl."

The boy said nothing, thinking of the deer, their gentle eyes and the swiftness of their running, and the last bursting leap like a stricken bird as the shot tore at their throats and pulled them down. Again and again he had seen it in his imagination as he listened to his father and his brothers talking.

"Rain or no rain, it don't do to grumble," his father muttered. "There's many would be glad these days for a job that brings in a bit of venison regular for the pot."

"They don't do no harm," the boy blurted out suddenly. "'Tis the ponies eats the tops off the young trees, I seen them."

His father chuckled. "'Twould be good if us was to send they at Lyndsterne a bit of horsemeat for their tables. Forestry Commission would like that!"

The boy's fists clenched. "It's cruel and wicked," he said hoarsely. "'Tis they officials ought to be hunted and killed!"

His father's face darkened. "Keep a civil tongue in your head," he said. He saw the helpless tears spring up in the boy's eyes, and he spat and wiped his moustache with the back of his hand. He jerked his head.

"Get in now and help your mother. Do seem all you're fit for."

The boy's lips tightened, then he turned without a word and went indoors. He said nothing throughout the meal. At moments he was aware of his father watching him and he looked down at his plate, fighting back the hot rush of tears that kept threatening to overwhelm him.

His two elder brothers talked and ate loudly. Already they had their father's thick body, the same muscled thighs bulging against their narrow corduroy trousers, the same bright eyes and carelessly sensual mouth. His mother never

He stood very still against a tree, holding his breath. The buck passed so close he could have touched it

sat down for more than a moment at a time, taking away plates and bringing bread and more vegetables, every now and again pushing back strands of her grey hair with the nervous, tired gesture of habit.

He did not really belong here, the boy thought. Always, it seemed, it was here that he only passed the time until he could be back on the hill again. The others had never wanted him; he was so much younger and had no part in their world, not even in his mother's, for she was always too busy.

Once, vaguely, he could remember when they had been amused by him, even his father, and would stop for a while to play or whittle pieces of wood into funny animal shapes for him. Gradually, as though they had begun to tire of it, everything had changed and he was left alone. And then, quite by chance, he had found the hill.

He had been nearly seven on that afternoon when his mother had sent him with a message for his father to the old barn in the woods that he knew the keepers used. It was early in spring and there was a freshness of colour and bird song all about him as he walked and ran under the ancient trees, scuffing up gay little showers of last year's leaves.

It was an enchanted world that could be changed and peopled at his every wish. The dusky glades where the trees were already in leaf became great caverns, strongholds of pirates, bursting with plundered treasure. The small streams were raging torrents that none but he had been brave enough to cross before.

But most of all, more exciting than anything else, was the huge forest itself, and there were dragons and terrible winged monsters that could eat a man in one mouthful; and he was his father, the most fearless and clever hunter in the world.

SUDDENLY the barn loomed up in front of him, he could hear gruff voices, and his heart leaped. Two keepers were standing out at the back and at once he was a small boy again, awed and nervous, as they caught sight of him.

"Looking for your dad?" one of them said.

He nodded dumbly. Then his eyes widened. Their sleeves were rolled up, they both had knives in their hands, and their wrists and fingers and the shining blades were spattered with blood.

"He's inside," the keeper said. He motioned with one hand, and the boy watched it with a sick fascination as the blood glistened in the sunlight.

"Dan, your nipper's here."

Hazily, as though from a great distance, he heard his father's voice.

"Send him round."

The keeper glanced down at his hands and smiled. "'Tain't nothing to bother ye, boy." He winked at his companion. "Why, afore long ye'll be shooting and skinning the deer better than any of us."

The boy began to tremble.

"Go on round, lad," the other keeper said. "Your dad's waiting."

The boy began to walk slowly round the barn. He kept his eyes on the ground. Something horrible was waiting for him on the other side; he could feel it. The sun was shining, the birds were singing, but he wanted to scream and run blindly from the sudden nightmare terror that fastened on him. But there was no escape; it dragged him forward remorselessly.

"Well, son?"

For an instant, the familiar voice broke his terror. He looked up. His father's bare arms were bathed in still warm blood. He was holding them out, away from his clothes, and the blood slid down his fingers and dropped thickly

Continued on page 12

Mrs. Alice Cullen—"a new type of M.P.?"

Miss Jennie Lee—"a sharp-edged purr"

Lady Tweedsmuir—"cool, aristocratic"

The Women in "the House"

by TOM DRIBERG, M.P.

Women M.P.s have certainly made their mark in this Parliament. But they're still too much a class apart

ABOUT A YEAR AGO, when a by-election was held in the Gorbals Division of Glasgow, Mrs. Alice Cullen, a typical "homely Scots body," scored a clear majority for Labour over the Conservative and Communist candidates combined.

In the year that has passed, she herself would not claim to have made much of a stir in the House of Commons. Her name does not often figure on the question-paper or in the columns of Hansard. Many of her colleagues probably do not know her by sight.

Yet, simple and unobtrusive as she is, Alice Cullen may serve as a symbol of a new type of M.P. For example, when an old woman in a grim Gorbals tenement took sick not long ago, with no one to look after her, it seemed natural to Alice Cullen that she, the servant of the people, should go and clean up the old woman's room, give her something to eat, make her comfortable and sit up with her all through the night until other arrangements could be made.

People sometimes ask if women M.P.s, as such, have made their mark. "Has the thirty-one year old experiment justified itself?" they want to know.

Perhaps the question itself betrays a superficial approach, a misunderstanding of the real position.

Out of a total of 640 M.P.s there are, at present, only twenty-two women. Most of the 618 men are not outstandingly brilliant or exceptional people. It is probably fortunate for the country that they represent, instead, a fair cross-section of the average sensible man in all walks of life—with a sprinkling, of course, of the exceptionally able and brilliant.

If this is so, why should all or most of the twenty-two women be expected to be exceptionally brilliant? A few of them are; and several names stand out in the record of the past—above all, for solid accomplishment, that of the late Eleanor Rathbone. She did what only a handful of male M.P.s in a century do. She invented a new idea—a social reform of far-reaching consequences.

She fought for it. She studied and planned and lobbied and argued. And nearly thirty years after the start of her campaign she had the satisfaction of knowing she had won. Her idea was family allowances.

Like Tolerant Aunt

Every family with more than one child today is indebted to the energetic and visionary spinster who founded the Family Endowment Committee in 1917. How did she do it? A senior civil servant understated it thus: "They were impressed by her vehemence." She treated the House of Commons like a tolerant maiden aunt among a pack of rowdy nephews.

She was as deeply absorbed as any man—more than most—in foreign affairs, but she realized that there were obviously certain subjects on which women had a special contribution to make in debate: marriage and the family, the home and its running, family budgets and food queues, conditions in the women's services or women's prisons.

One evening, in the last Parliament, talking to a friend in the Lobby, she said: "Our presence here was finally justified today."

The friend asked why—thinking that the answer would relate to family allowances.

"Because," she said, "Colonel —— [naming a fine old crusted Tory] asked a question about the shortage of babies' napkins!"

Not every woman M.P. can be an Eleanor Rathbone. All that can fairly be asked is that, *on the average*, they should be as diligent and effective as the men. This they certainly are.

Indeed, their average is probably somewhat higher than the men's, since there are no "pocket boroughs" for women as there are for male trade unionists and the sons of some landed noblemen. Every woman M.P. has had to fight her own way to a candidature.

In fact, all such comparisons are irrelevant. We shall not be able to judge the achievement of women M.P.s until we have ceased to think of them as *women* M.P.s and have begun to think of them simply *as M.P.s*; and we shall not be able to do that until there are very many more of them than there are now; until perhaps fifty per cent of all M.P.s are women.

To some extent, women are already accepted on their individual merits, in this sexless way, on many local councils and committees.

It is, therefore, up to the political parties, especially the local parties, to drop their conventional prejudice against women candidates. To a lesser extent, it is also up to the women already in Parliament to shun resolutely the unworthier attributes of femininity. It is not at all rare for women M.P.s of all ages and shapes to be heard lamenting that the speaker "hasn't called a single woman to speak today"—thus showing that, perhaps half-consciously, they do still regard themselves as a class apart.

Top In Popularity

Women are sometimes said to be more conservative by nature than men; yet nineteen of the twenty-two women M.P.s belong to the Labour Party. (Possibly this merely indicates that local Conservative associations are more conservative than local Labour parties.)

Of the three others, one, Lady Megan Lloyd George, is one of the most gifted and delightful speakers, of either sex, in the House. She is almost unchallengeably the most popular woman M.P., not only among her male colleagues but, a more substantial achievement, among the women also.

Lady Megan is a Liberal. The two

Conservatives are Lady Davidson and Lady Tweedsmuir.

Lady Davidson is a jolly, tweedy, slightly brisk and bossy woman—good with the Women's Institute and the Mother's Union, you would say. She shows no animosity towards her Socialist opponents, male or female, though it must be a matter of continued surprise to her that the lower classes have got so far out of hand.

Lady Tweedsmuir is regarded by some as the most elegant and glamorous of the women M.P.s. Like Mrs. Cullen, she got in at a by-election. There the likeness ends. Lady Tweedsmuir is as cool and aristocratic as Mrs. Cullen is plump, down-to-earth and motherly.

Mrs. Jean Mann, another Scottish M.P., is a mother and housewife, with grown-up children. She is also a strong debater, with a gift for putting across ironical supplementary questions of enormous length that pulverize either the Opposition or any backward Minister.

Several of the Labour women have this useful quality of being devastating. Jennie Lee, a Scottish miner's daughter, has the warmest, richest voice in the House; but, should any ex-coalowner take a crack at the miners, there will be a sharp edge to her purr. And no male Minister cares to find himself up against either of those twin heavyweights, Mrs. Leah Manning and Mrs. Bessie Braddock, both women with minds of their own.

When Dr. Edith Lashes Out

If male Ministers don't like tackling Mrs. Braddock, male back-benchers have often been known to quail when lashed by the tongue of Dr. Edith Summerskill—the first married woman ever to have been honoured by membership of the Privy Council with a right to the prefix, "Rt. Hon."

Dr. Summerskill stands up at the dispatch-box taut, spruce and strapping, always impeccably dressed. But a close look reveals traces of the strain of hard work in an "unpopular" job. Her face, with its proudly-arched nose and high cheekbones, is sometimes unduly pale and mask-like; her lavish golden hair is touched with grey.

But the mask dissolves in ready laughter, especially if Dr. Summerskill herself is caught tripping. She is not the inhuman automaton that some make her out to be. She likes young people. She loves exchanging badinage with them: hence the famous butter-or-marge "challenge"—a joke in origin, but seized on and played up as are all her occasional verbal indiscretions.

In her years at the Ministry of Food, she has mastered her difficult subject in consummate detail. She is indeed the oustanding success among the women in this Parliament.

The impact of women on Parliamentary customs and manners, in or out of the debating chamber, has been slight.

On the lowest floor, level with the terrace, the women have a modest room of their own, where they can write and relax and "let down their back hair."

The members' smoking-room, theoretically open to all M.P.s, is rarely invaded by the women. With its leather sofas and its aroma of stale cigar smoke, it seems exclusively masculine.

One woman M.P. (Lady Tweedsmuir) recently gave birth to a baby. There is no reason why special accommodation should not be found, in the vast Palace of Westminster, not only for women M.P.s but for their infant offspring. There is plenty of room for a crèche, or a nursery—later on, perhaps, even for a kindergarten which might teach the ABC of politics.

It would help to make the House more like home.

THE CHANGING WORLD

Continued from page 10

on the grass. Behind him, through the open doorway, the boy had a moment's sickening vision of the dim interior; the bloodstained, steaming carcases hanging from a beam and the other keepers working on them. The stench rose up at him, and he closed his eyes and fled.

He ran with a desperate urgency, heedless of the branches and trailing brambles that whipped across his face and bare knees, until suddenly he stumbled and fell forward on the ground. He lay there shuddering.

When he opened his eyes, he was looking at the view from the little hill for the first time. Gradually, some of the terror and bewildering pain ebbed out of him, and he had stayed there, very still and quiet, until the dusk gathered about him. . . .

"You've eaten nothing." The boy looked up, startled, at his mother's worn face. "I'm not hungry," he muttered.

His father grunted. "He's got the deer on his mind again," he said.

His brothers chuckled. The eldest said casually: "Why don't ye take him beating with ye tomorrow?"

The boy started and flushed. "I won't go," he said.

"Won't?" His father scowled. "Ye'll come quick enough if I tell ye to!"

The boy felt the hot tears surge up. His eldest brother pushed back his chair in disgust and stood up. "Can't ye do nothing else but blub like a girl?"

His father's scowl deepened. "Ye'll come with me tomorrow now," he said. "Do ye understand?"

The boy was silent. The three men went outside, and his mother came and took his plate away.

"There's nothing to be afraid of," she said softly. "You'll be all right with your dad."

THE morning was cold and grey. A fine drizzling rain swirled like vapour across the stretches of open land, clinging in tiny beads to the dun-coloured jackets of the keepers.

It seemed to seep through the boy, gathering heavily on his heart, as he watched his father talking to the group of men who stood round him, their guns under their arms. He longed to slip away quietly among the trees, but there was no escape.

Four of the keepers shouldered their guns and tramped away. The boy felt the coldness of dread settling on his stomach; in a few minutes the first shoot would begin. He watched them desperately until they turned the corner of a ride, listening still to the swishing of their boots through leaves and fern. Then the grey morning was silent.

It seemed ages that they waited, his father and the two remaining keepers talking occasionally in low voices. Once his father glanced at him and said something to the others and they chuckled harshly. The boy's mouth trembled. He hated them; he hated them all, even his father. And in the same instant he was aware of something else that he had not felt before, a slow, steady pricking of anger.

"We'll spread out now," his father said. He slipped the cord from the hound's neck and let her go. She went off at a shambling run, her nose to the ground, whimpering slightly. He waved at the boy.

"Get over to those beeches," he said. "Go slow and keep listening. If ye can't see, ye'll still hear my horn. Keep in line with it and keep hollering, else the guns won't know where ye are and like as not ye'll walk into a load of buckshot. So keep your ears skinned and use your voice. Off with ye now."

As they moved slowly over the open ground the boy could see his father and

the other two spread out on his left at intervals of several hundred yards. His mouth was dry and he thought of nothing now but keeping in line with them. Somewhere in front of him was the other, silent line of men, hidden behind trees, waiting. The guns.

He heard the keening note of his father's horn, the sudden yelp of the hound. She had "found."

The sound made the boy's blood run cold. His heart began to thump painfully. All at once the ground changed and he was waist high in fern and brambles on the edge of a fir plantation. He forced his way through and glanced round. The others had disappeared and he could see nothing for the mass of close-growing trees. He was alone.

For an instant he was panic-stricken. He stood motionless, breathing heavily. He remembered his father's words and he tried to shout but his voice was locked in his throat.

Suddenly there was a crashing noise in front of him. He had a momentary glimpse of the mottled hide, the jagged curve of antler. At once the panic left him.

He stood very still against a tree, holding his breath. The buck plunged past him—its dark nostrils flaring, its tongue extended—so close that he could have put out his hand and touched it, but it did not see him. It leapt on, out into the open land he had come through, and the boy could have wept with gladness as he watched it go, running farther from the waiting guns every moment. He had cheated them. He had let the deer go past him. It was safe now. Safe.

AND he could go back now—no one would know, he could say he had got lost. But there were other deer that he could not help. The nightmare feeling that he had known before came down on him again, driving him forward.

He stumbled out into a clearing among the trees. He went on blindly, almost running now, aware that the ground had changed again and he was in the open, nearing the top of a little hill.

The boy dropped down in the wet grass.

He could see the great bay of land sweeping down from the hill, the silent majesty of the distant fir trees. They were watching. All his world was still, watching the one small pulse of movement that now leaped through it in the running of a young deer.

Helpless, stinging anger rose up in the boy at the sight of his father crouching there on the hill, looking down on his world. And then anguish gripped him. Slowly, effortlessly, the young deer seemed to lean in its flight, turning in a wide arc towards the top of the hill. As slowly, his father's gun moved up to his shoulder.

The boy struggled to stand up, to shout, but it was too late. He could see the delicate cloven hooves now, the large eyes aware of him and still coming on, certain of its swiftness, unaware of the lightning cruelty that could leap from his father's shoulder.

The gun jerked. The deer stumbled a few yards, then struggled up and ran on at a sharp tangent. The blood was roaring in the boy's ears. His father had shot badly, the deer was only wounded and it would get away and limp through the woods in helpless agony, struggling for life until the last exhausted moment.

He sprang to his feet and ran desperately. All the proud swiftness had gone from the creature; it moved in broken leaps and he gained on it steadily. Again, it stumbled and sank forward on the grass. It turned its head, watching him, and he could see the gentle black eyes glazed with pain. He saw its hind legs pushing at the ground, and he shouted frantically:

"Lie still! Oh, please lie still!"

Then it was up and running on. The boy flung himself forward on the deer and looked round wildly.

He was alone in the middle of his world, every moment was an agony of pain and fear for the creature that lay warm and heaving under his hands . . . and he did not know what to do. He began to sob. Then he pressed his hands with all his strength round the young deer's neck. "Please let it die," he babbled helplessly. "Please let it die!"

The large eyes rolled up horribly, but the smooth hide was hard and firm. Tears poured down his cheeks and he leaned breathlessly against the warm body.

Something pressed against his hip. His eyes widened with horror. Then he pulled out the penknife.

HIS hands were shaking and he could hardly open the knife. He stared at a small dark spot on the side of the deer's neck, then he closed his eyes tightly and plunged the knife down with all the strength of despair.

A terrible harsh scream, almost human in its agony, tore the air; the sharp hooves thrashed madly, and the boy leapt away. He saw the blood gushing from the wound he had made, but still the body heaved and the legs jerked. He flung himself forward desperately, stabbing and stabbing until his hands were slippery with blood and there was only an absolute stillness on the ground—and a hand gripped his arm, pulling him to his feet.

"Ye've killed'n all right," his father said. "Ye've killed'n now."

A long shudder ran over the boy's face; his eyes were crazed with grief. He turned to his father, words trembling on his tongue, then he saw the other keepers coming towards them, and one of them called out: "Well done, lad."

He looked at his father and saw the steady approval in his eyes.

"Ay, well done, son," he said.

The boy was silent, trembling.

"Ye don't have to hump your first kill," a keeper said. "We'll carry it for ye."

He followed slowly as they made their way back to the hill. Behind him in the distance, he knew the tall fir trees were watching still. He was aware of the enormous silence everywhere as the strangers walked through his world with its creature that he had killed for them.

Life and soul of the party

by RICHARD COLLIER

The boss of "joke house" likes to laugh at his own pranks. But for him electric handshakes and explosive salt cellars are also big business

Poker-faced, Gilly Davenport holds a match for an unwary customer to light a Demon Explosive Cigarette

"COME IN," SAYS Gilly Davenport jovially, holding out his hand, and something in the nature of a mild electric shock passes swiftly between the visitor's wrist and collar-bone. Gilly is wearing a little invention of his own known as the "Demon Explosive Hand Shaker," but, unless it happens to be one of his off-days, this is only the beginning of the fun. At once Gilly is feigning penitence and offering his cigarette-case.

But, try as he may, the stranger can't seem to get *his* cigarette ignited. This is Stage Two in the friendship—special non-lighting matches.

Even when Gilly produces a lighter that does work, the stranger is still on very tricky ground indeed. A moment later he is massaging whatever remains of his eyebrows; the Demon Explosive Hand Shaker has been succeeded by the Demon Explosive Cigarette.

Gilly Davenport, in fact, according to one's point of view, is just the man to liven up a long winter's evening or just the man to go two miles out of your way to avoid. In any case, one has to take him as one finds him, for Gilly, who is dark, voluble and forty-five, is hardly likely to change any of the habits that have already made a comfortable living for two generations of Davenports.

Together with his two younger brothers, Gus (who looks after the magic and conjuring), and Wally (who attends to the mail orders), plus sister Winifred (who does the accounts), he runs one of Britain's largest "joke houses," where humour in its least inhibited form has proved to be a very big business indeed.

Nearly Expelled From School

Few offspring, in fact, can have followed so diligently in father's footsteps as the Davenports. It was in 1898 that their father, Lewis Davenport, first opened his little joke-and-magic shop in London's Mile End Road, and Gilly, who joined the firm when it moved to New Oxford Street in 1926, had devoted his life to practical joking since his earliest schooldays.

Gilly relates: "Father used to try the tricks out on us boys, so it was only natural that we should take them to school and try them out on the other kids. Once I was nearly expelled; I'd given the lads some chocolates and the headmaster thought they were all poisoned.

"Isn't it funny how some people can't take a joke? All I'd done was stuff them with cayenne pepper."

In the fifty-odd years that the business has been running, the Davenports have amassed nearly 400 of these pranks, some of which are so old that no one can remember their origin, but many of which Gilly invented himself.

The process is rarely a conscious effort. Gilly says: "In a good year, you might think up six 'naturals,' one after the other. Sometimes I've gone two years without having one idea."

Occasionally ideas are supplied by customers themselves, who may require jokes to be specially manufactured for their own purposes. Recently, for example, a young man

Snake-in-the-chocs. Women's reaction is a sure sign of how a joke will sell

called on Gilly and explained that he had invented the perfect tea-party joke.

"Often when you ask someone to have a second cup of tea, they say: 'Well, just half a cup.' When that happens, this bloke will be able to produce the joke that we turned out for him—half a china cup."

Before they are actually launched on the market, all the jokes that Gilly invents himself are methodically tried out in advance on sister Winifred. Twenty years of exploding powder puffs, flaming chocolates, and cushions that scream shrilly when you sit on them might be enough to wreck the bravest spirit, but Gilly maintains that the violence of Winifred's reaction is still a sure indication of how the joke can be expected to sell.

Ideas Are Queueing Up

Often six months may elapse between the birth of an idea and the completed product. New ideas have to take their turn, and the Davenport workshop in Forest Gate, where Gilly employs eight workers, is kept consistently busy turning out thousands of orders a year.

Blackpool and Margate are the priority customers in the summer, but London, although busier towards Christmas, maintains a fairly steady demand all the year round.

The rate of production depends as much on the intricacy of the joke as on the demand. New items are made up in a preliminary batch of 2,000 to await the customers' verdict.

Simple items, such as the "impossible spoon" (with a hole in its centre), flow from the workshop at the rate of 2,000 a week. Jokes like the "boogey boogey," an ingenious little clockwork horror covered with fur, that leaps from behind table-napkins, take at least two days' work to perfect.

Half-crown Is The Limit

As far as possible, Gilly tries to keep his retail prices down, since, although trade is as good as it ever was, few people in these days are prepared to spend more than 2s. 6d. on one joke. The popular-priced jokes range from the "lighted cigarette" at 3d. (calculated to cause unlimited feminine hand-wringing when placed on a highly polished surface) to the "plate-lifters" (which fit under the tablecloth and jerk the dinner service into the air) at 2s. 6d.

Jobs that require a specialist's knowledge to make them authentic are farmed out to firms normally producing the genuine article—the corkscrew with the left-handed thread, for instance, which quickly reduces would-be bottle-openers to frenzy.

Like most other manufacturers, Gilly finds that shortages have definitely hampered his business, and in some extreme cases have even forced him to cease production altogether. One of the first jokes to vanish from the scene was a chemical product known as the "filthy soap," which went with the introduction of soap-rationing; it turned the bather as black as a coon and was a great favourite of Gilly's.

The shortage of silk decrees that the demon snakes which leap from shaving sticks shall no longer be green and shiny; the customer must be content to be hit in the nose with an ordinary common-or-garden spring. Even import difficulties arise; those customers of Gilly's who used to favour musical toilet-rolls from Switzerland must now remain unsatisfied.

To counterbalance these set-backs, rationing has also been responsible for some stupendous successes. One classic example was the imitation broken egg, a masterpiece in celluloid, which Gilly perfected only five years ago and which sold over fifty gross in the first months it was on the market. Gilly is not worried that eggs are currently scarce again. "It's rationing," he says, "that gives the joke the full savour."

As Gilly sees it, a joke manufacturer has to keep his finger constantly on the pulse of the public; although perennials like the "spilt ink" (a darkened bottle with a celluloid "blot") are always selling steadily, there is no protection against rival firms cashing in on the same idea. To prove the copyright of a joke involves a lengthy court case, which normally entails more expense than the joke is worth.

Tricks Should Be Topical

The most successful jokes, therefore, are often those with the most topical appeal, so the joke manufacturer must strike while the iron is hot. The guiding principle, Gilly explains, is to arrive at a basic idea and then explore how it can be best adapted for other occasions.

Davenport Senior, for instance, took credit for inventing the "wobbly cheese"—a piece of imitation Gruyère which whirrs throatily when lifted from the plate. Gilly, with a stroke of genius, carried it a stage further and perfected the "wobbly hot-cross bun."

Shortly afterwards, casting round for various jests to enliven sluggish days, he lit on two further successes—the joke glass of beer (a glass lined with amber cellophane, topped with cotton-wool "froth") and the joke ice-cream (a tempting scoop of cotton-wool between two genuine wafers). But Gilly likes to cover all contingencies, so for those who might be drinking real beer he produced some joke "flies," which are handy for dropping in when the drinker isn't looking.

The average citizen, regular and peaceable in his habits, with no desire to sprinkle magic soot on his wife's new dress or to wear a straw hat that says "Mama" when he raises it, may well wonder what kind of people these are who make Gilly's shop a regular port of call.

For, as Gilly points out, although small boys come from time to time to replenish their stocks of stink bombs (sulphuretted hydrogen), itching powder (finely chopped horse-hair) and sneezing powder (a mild form of pepper), they by no means form the bulk of his clientele.

One of Gilly's most faithful clients is an Irish parson, who arrives regularly four times a year to sample any new items. Another, a well-known film-actor, nourishes a passion for stink-bombs, which Gilly, who has seen his pictures, feels is appropriate.

Gilly maintains that every nation has its own sense of humour, so that an accent is usually a sure guide to the kind of joke that will tickle the customer's fancy. Americans, he says, favour the boisterous and nerve-shattering; for them he trots out explosive pencils, explosive salt-cellars, cigars that flare like acetylene welders after a couple of puffs. Britons, on the other hand, prefer "table jokes"—floating lumps of sugar, chocolates filled with sawdust, teaspoons that leap like fleas from the saucer.

Germans Don't Catch On

In Gilly's experience, the nation that appears to be least blessed with a sense of humour are the Germans—"anything except a false nose is beyond them." Indians, by contrast, prefer a puzzle, anything solemn and intricate. While so far as the impolite is concerned, says Gilly, he could wish for no better customers than the French.

At one time he found that this was a taste unaccountably shared by every page-boy in the district, although it took him a long time to discover why. Eventually it transpired that a flourishing hotel-lounge racket had grown up around one particular joke, and that wealthy dowagers were paying considerable sums of "hush money" in return for silence regarding the "misbehaviour" of their Pekingese.

Nor were the page-boys alone in singling out Gilly's shop as a possible source of easy pickings. On one occasion a man arrived and told a rather unconvincing tale about wanting to scare a few friends. "Just a few tricks to play in the dark," he said lamely. "A rubber hand, if you've got such a thing, and a small roll of white cloth that I could keep folded up in my sleeve or my mouth."

Gilly looked at him with a reproving eye. "Ever been to a séance?" he asked. He reports that the man at least had the grace to blush.

He Was *Not* Amused

Few people will be surprised to learn that the unwary among Gilly's customers sometimes react unfavourably to his jests. There was the time when a rather stolid man came in to buy a conjuring set for someone's birthday. Gilly couldn't resist handing him a telescope and asking him to have a look through it, but the man couldn't see a thing.

"I'm sorry," said Gilly gravely. "There must be something wrong with it," although he could hardly contain himself as the man left the shop sporting one of the finest black eyes ever seen. When the man returned later, ready to reciprocate in earnest, Gilly had discovered some urgent business on the other side of town.

Gilly still feels sorry for the man. No sense of humour.

Dr. Buchman and his strange flock

by GEOFFREY WILLIAMSON

As a guest of the Oxford Group at its mountain centre in Switzerland, Williamson talked freely to Buchman's followers and met the leader himself—"queerest memory of all in a weekend crammed with incongruous impressions." Here is his second article on Buchman's Moral Re-Armament Movement

DR. FRANK BUCHMAN, the leader of Moral Re-Armament, is undoubtedly a shrewd showman. He is, for example, not above dressing up in Burmese costume to receive a distinguished Eastern visitor. He says that the way to run a meeting is to know who is there, to know their needs and to answer them. He does not disdain the methods of the hot-gospeller. His drilled choir is used to keep the atmosphere at assemblies supercharged with emotion.

On the other hand, this remarkable septuagenarian can quite as cheerfully dispense with ceremony. Just before I left the Oxford Group headquarters at Caux, Switzerland, I was sent for so that he could say a personal farewell.

Dr. Buchman received me in his suite. I found him lolling in bed, one bare foot thrust out from the coverlets. The remains of his luncheon littered a tray upon his lap. In a weekend crammed with incongruous impressions, this remains the queerest memory of all.

It is not easy to assess the value of the Caux Assembly, with its impressive procession of world delegates — including twenty-seven Cabinet Ministers in office and 118 Members of Parliament from twenty-six nations — and its confusing medley of dilettante evangelism, mysticism and commonsense ideology. It is even more difficult to reconcile the sybaritic tendencies of some of its supporters with, say, a choir singing theme songs like "Sorry is a Magic Little Word" or with the fanatical zeal of Dr. Buchman's closest supporters.

His hold over these latter is obvious; yet none of the many I questioned was able to explain where his secret lies. They say he binds no one by vows or commitments.

Gave Up Careers

No Buchmanite smokes and no alcohol is served, but there are no rules about this. His followers declare that he has a gift of seeing into men's minds and hearts, of assessing their potentialities and of inspiring them to work for an ideal.

Many of his full-time workers admit unashamedly that they stopped working for their living to devote their whole energies to the cause of Moral Re-Armament. "'Frank says, 'Where God guides, he provides,'" they explain. They enjoy the best of everything: good homes, expensive clothes, smart cars, rich food.

They receive no official salaries from Group funds, only expenses; but a favoured practice seems to be for each to find a private sponsor—a prosperous industrialist, perhaps—to sustain him as an apostle of M.R.A. by sending regular gifts. These gifts include cash, clothes, motor cars and the use of furnished houses. One Grouper told me that his own car had come from "someone who had been 'changed' in rather a wonderful way."

It is not only the high-ups who solve their economic problems in this fashion. At Caux I met a young typist who, having given her own savings of £50 to Group funds, was prepared to work without salary for the rest of her life in the interests of Moral Re-Armament. She was confident that her economic needs would be met somehow.

There are three classes of Oxford Group followers. The first is a compact inner ring of fanatical zealots who have been with the movement through all its changing phases. The second is a body of sincere supporters who came in after the switch to Moral Re-Armament in 1938. The third is a considerable outer ring of interested people who think: "It's sheer idealism; but worth trying if it makes for world peace."

The War Captive

At Caux I met, and talked with, all types. In the bookshop at Mountain House I bought a copy of *Escape to Live*, by Wing Commander Edward Howell, O.B.E., D.F.C. A few minutes later I was chatting with the author.

I found his story interesting. Sent to take over the remnant of a Hurricane squadron which had been withdrawn from Greece to Crete, he was severely wounded when the Germans attacked by parachute. Half-dead, he was taken prisoner and flown to Greece.

He lay helpless for months. Thinking of the past, he recalled the day when his brother had returned home radiating a new kind of self-confidence. He had joined the Oxford Group. But Edward, an atheist, had noted the change in his brother without desiring anything like it in himself.

Lying in despair at Salonika, there was nothing he was not prepared to try if it could win him freedom. Howell tells how he asked God for guidance—as an experiment. Then, in spite of his crippled state, he says he felt a thrusting urge to escape. Without the use of his arms he scaled a wall and won his way to freedom. He believes "guidance" brought him through.

I had heard a lot about the influence of the Oxford Group in industrial areas. Then I met Bill Yates, National Union of Mineworkers branch president, at the Victoria Pit in North Staffordshire.

Bill told of his personal unhappiness and how he had taken his grievances and ill-temper to the pit. One evening he saw *The Forgotten Factor*, M.R.A. propaganda play. He absorbed its doctrine of

Tribute from India: Buchman gets a traditional garland. His closest supporters display a fanatical zeal

square-dealing, he said, and worked out with his manager a new policy based upon honesty and unselfishness.

"Moral Re-Armament," Yates declared, "now claims many supporters among the miners of Staffordshire."

The many Groupists I met and talked to all seemed convinced that it was their duty to spread the word of Buchmanism to the world. At Caux the "College of the Good Road" turns out 800 trainees each year. It has been called "the Sandhurst, Saint Cyr and West Point in the war of ideas." And there are other ways of reaching the peoples of almost every land.

Starring "Miss Trust"

For example, I saw the Moral Re-Armament film, *The Good Road*, being made at an improvised studio in the Comptoir Suisse, Lausanne.

Full of propaganda, it shows how Honesty, Unselfishness and Love can transform the home, factory and farm—and unite all nations. I saw the stage version at Caux and in a factory scene a character called Miss Trust, who sowed discord and brought the wheels of industry to a stop, was dressed in *red*. She carried a *red* handbag and a *red* umbrella.

The film script is the joint work of one-time tennis star "Bunny" Austin and Alan Thornhill. Three hundred amateurs from thirty-four nations have been working on it. Mr. and Mrs. Guy Pearce, formerly with Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer's British film unit, are jointly responsible for make-up and hairdressing. They came out of retirement to give their services as a goodwill gesture, although neither is a Groupist.

"You know," Mrs. Pearce said, "the Moral Re-Armament women don't use cosmetics. You'd never believe the time I had persuading them to use film make-up."

The Good Road, film version, is being issued in English, French and German. There are to be copies for worldwide circulation.

This is typical of the methods used to publicise Moral Re-Armament. Pamphlets, magazines, plays, books, sheet music and gramophone records are all poured out proficiently and profusely. Task forces of trained M.R.A. speakers are likely soon to be sent to Germany, France, Italy, Japan, China, Malaya, Burma and India to spread the ideology of the Group.

Every enterprise is financed as Caux is financed—by gifts in cash or kind, plus volunteer labour. The Group is registered in England as an Association "not for profit." There are separate registrations for Switzerland, Canada and America.

An interesting preamble in the American articles begins: "Riches, reputation or rest have been for none of us the motives of association." But I can see nothing to prevent anyone from professing to belong to the movement or from raising funds for his own support on the strength of such a claim.

The London organization includes a travel bureau, a book and publicity department and a teleprinter installation by which messages are exchanged with Caux twice daily. Some members have the use of many houses in Charles Street, Mayfair, where they live on a communal basis. Offices are in Hays Mews, linked by basement passage with Clive House, Berkeley Square. This mansion, former home of Clive of India, was presented to Dr. Buchman by his followers, who have free run of the place in his prolonged absences.

With its worldwide activities, the Oxford Group's economic system has become increasingly complex.

Until the 1948 Companies Act came into being, the London company was not required to file full accounts. No statement was made to members, because there is no enrolled membership. No one knows how many followers are ranged under the Oxford Group banner. There may be millions. I saw an audited balance-sheet, for the British organization alone, that showed total assets of £126,088, and total income for 1947 was given as £69,894 against expenditure of £51,625. These figures exclude numerous activities.

For example, when the revue, *The Good Road*, was produced in London, it was financed through a "National Committee of Invitation." Funds were collected, to the total of £20,000, from all over the country.

Apart from such separately financed enterprises, the Group is spared formidable expenses through the intervention of wealthy supporters. Thus the fleet of three private planes which bore guests and Groupists to and from Switzerland for the recent World Assembly was chartered by Sir Roy Pinsent, a Birmingham solicitor. As the double flight costs about £400 for each plane, his gesture was a generous one, even though some passengers paid their share.

How It All Began

I had been promised by Garth Lean, a member of the Council of Management, that I could question anyone I chose at Caux. That is how I came to meet Loudon Hamilton.

Hamilton told me how, twenty-eight years ago, when he was a student at Christ Church, Oxford, he and a few fellow undergraduates had run a beer and beefsteak society. Most were young ex-officers of the first World War, wise in many things, yet disillusioned and perplexed in an unsettled postwar world that looked like crumbling.

Puffing their briars till the small hours, quaffing tankards of ale, they swapped theories on how *they* would put the world right. Into one such gathering came a mild-mannered, middle-aged American. He sat silent and aloof, almost forgotten by the beer-and-beefsteakers.

Towards the tail-end of the proceedings someone, as an act of condescension, invited the stranger to speak. He immediately held his listeners spellbound.

"He was able to talk quite freely and naturally," said Hamilton, "of things which the average Englishman finds it hard to mention without embarrassment. He could mention spiritual matters and use God's name as naturally as if he were discussing everyday affairs.

"He began to tell us of changed lives. He described changes in men so like ourselves that interest was riveted at once." The interest spread. It moved rapidly throughout Christ Church, then through the whole University. Undergraduates would queue for hours to have a few moments alone chatting with Buchman.

How Name Was Coined

The American's magnetism was such that many of the young men he drew to him then remained with him for life. Hamilton became a master at Eton, but he subsequently resigned to devote his energies to the Group. He is now a member of the Council of Management.

The movement began as "A First Century Christian Fellowship." It was not until 1928 that the term Oxford Group was accidentally coined when a porter chalked it on the side of a truck to identify the party during a South African tour.

Early days were marred by stories of public confessions of sexual aberrations by emotional youngsters who attended the first small gatherings. Some of these stories, says a Group spokesman, were fabricated, but this sex element is mentioned by the late Harold Begbie in his book, *Life Changers*, and undoubtedly existed.

In 1934, Buchman defined his aims as follows: "The Oxford Group is a Christian revolution whose concern is vital Christianity. Its aim is a new social order under the dictatorship of the spirit of God, making for better human relationships. . . . World-changing will come through life-changing."

His teaching probably derives partly from his Eastern travels: he wandered for years in Asia, first as a Y.M.C.A. secretary, later as a personal evangelist. He holds, with Confucius, that moral order must precede political order. When someone said the world needed a new John Wesley, he replied: "What about a lot of little Wesleys?"

That is the purpose of the College of the Good Road—to train a lot of "little Wesleys"—and a school is now projected where younger children can receive early instruction.

How They're "Changed"

Followers strive to achieve the four standards of absolute honesty, purity, unselfishness and love. Each morning in a "quiet time" they accept the thoughts that come to them as Divine guidance.

Thus they become "changed" and change others. They believe this creates harmony which will spread from individuals to nations.

It was not until 1938, when war threatened, that Buchman coined the phrase "Moral Re-Armament." His shrewd timing won him tremendous support.

Today, at seventy-one, he contrives to exercise an unobtrusive leadership. He has plunged the Group into the arena of world politics, where no holds are barred and where everything is overshadowed by the atom.

In all their present efforts, the Groupists are beating one big drum, offering their ideology as superior to Communism or any other -ism. While it confined its policy of "change" to student, family and industrial circles, the Group faced nothing worse than an occasional snub. Now, its future may prove far more stormy than its past.

Scene from *The Good Road*. Worldwide distribution is aimed for the film. It's full of Buchmanite propaganda

"The dead man came to life." Mrs. Muller's voice failed; she was marble pale under the light. It was Storm Kennedy who caught her as she toppled

HANGOVER HOUSE

by ***SAX ROHMER***

ILLUSTRATED BY SEABRIGHT

At last the mystery was almost solved. One person could supply the missing link. And, McGraw realized, he had let that person go!

STORM KENNEDY, private detective, is commissioned by Lord Glengale to watch his daughter, Lady Hilary Bruton, whom he suspects is being blackmailed. Finding that Hilary and her aunt "Elfie" Elphinstowe are going to an all-night party at Hangover House, a dilapidated country mansion, Kennedy goes, too.

Soon after he arrives, he sees Hilary run in from a terrace, and a few minutes later, the body of a stabbed man is found on the terrace.

No one is allowed to leave the house until Chief Inspector McGraw and Sergeant Sample, of Scotland Yard, arrive next morning.

Everyone is interrogated: Larkhall Pike, the occupier, an irascible old ex-officer (who let out the house for parties); Hilary; Elfie; Sidonia (a dance band singer); Peter Faraway (husband of the hostess, who left in a huff when Peter began flirting with Sidonia); Mrs. Muller (a beautiful foreigner); Mohammed (a mysterious Egyptian); Allen Lovelace (a shy song-writer); and Kennedy himself.

A gold object, shaped like a pen, left among the dead man's effects, is found to be missing. Kennedy finds it in a summer-house, after talking to Hilary. It comes to light when he is searched and is found to be a container for a hypodermic syringe.

Thinking that there is some sort of collusion between Kennedy and Hilary, McGraw interrogates them together. They are interrupted by someone coming down the stairs. It is the "dead" man. He manages to utter: "It was La. . . ." and then collapses. Hilary gasps: "Geoff!"

The man is rushed to hospital, where he dies. The stabbing had not killed him: he had been in a coma following a fit.

McGraw allows Lovelace and Mrs. Muller to leave, and Lord Glengale arrives at the house. Kennedy manages to interview Hilary alone. She tells him that the dead man, Geoffrey Arlington, an adventurer with a bad reputation, had threatened to blackmail her and she had arranged to meet him at the party.

He had asked her for money, saying that his life was threatened, but she had refused. She had then run into the house. He had followed shouting "Larry!"—his pet name for her.

Kennedy realizes with a shock that this is what the dying man must have been trying to say on the stairs: "It was La. . . ."

FINAL INSTALMENT

Hilary's Story

"I KNOW what you are thinking," Hilary said in a quiet voice. "And you may even be right. He—Geoffrey—always called me Larry——"

"He had a Tonic Sol-fa mind," Elsie broke in. "He gave a pet name to every woman he knew, one beginning with Do, Ra, Me, Fa, So, La or Te."

She was trying to help Kennedy; to give him time to cover up a momentary lapse of control. He rewarded her with a grateful smile.

"You mean, Hilary, he may have meant to say 'It was Larry'?"

"Quite possibly." Hilary spoke with composure. "He was a devil—a vindictive devil. I had dared him to—do his worst. Maybe he was trying to do it."

Storm Kennedy was becoming convinced that the association went deeper than any shady financial transaction. But he told himself he must forget it. Hilary was a client, unprofitable but lovely. His business was to get her clear, and then—get out.

"I should like to make sure of the facts so far."

Hilary flashed him an appealing glance, bit her lip, and looked away. The change of tone had registered.

"You returned an Egyptian necklace (the police have found it) which you had

wrapped in a handkerchief; I presume, so that it didn't get mixed up with the other odds and ends in your bag?"

"Of course."

"When you put it into his hand, it was still wrapped in the handkerchief?"

"Yes."

"He evidently dropped the necklace—but retained the handkerchief. Now, if you can bear it, let's go on. The dagger which he claimed to have stolen from Mecca—was this the dagger found beside his body?"

"I think so. I never saw it very well, out there in the fog. But I think so."

"Did he actually hold it in his hand when you turned and ran back to the house?"

"Yes. He was waving it about—raving. He said his death was inevitable unless he could escape the fanatics who had followed him. His only hope was to slip out of England, secretly. He would have to bribe someone to smuggle him over to the French coast, as they would be watching the ports."

"Mr. Arlington might have succeeded as a sensational novelist where he failed as an explorer," Kennedy remarked bitterly. "What was your part to be?"

"He claimed that the custodians, or the Arab League, or someone—truly, I can't remember, exactly—would pay a big ransom if he could entrench himself and bargain with them. He spoke of twenty thousand pounds."

"Which he asked you to advance?"

Hilary nodded; her averted face was expressionless.

"All right. That's clear enough. You refused. Now, you say he followed you?"

"He did. That was when he called out. I dashed on to the terrace. I don't quite know how I found the steps. I ran along until I came to an open window. I didn't care what window it was. I had only one thing in mind: to get away from him. I rushed through—and found myself in a room I had never been in before."

"Yes, Hilary? Go on. This is important."

SHE went on jerkily: "Only one lamp was alight. There was nobody in the room. At random, and simply because it was right by my hand, I pressed a switch . . . and the lamp went out."

"And then?"

"Then, I listened for just a moment. I thought I heard voices——"

"Where?"

"Outside. Don't ask me *whose* voices, because I was too upset to know. I stumbled across the room to where I had seen a door. I found it, opened it. . . . You and Elfie were standing in the passage."

Elfie was watching Storm Kennedy with an expression hard to define, except that it was charged with some potent message, some message he failed to read. He turned to Hilary. She sat quite still, her lashes lowered.

"And that is all you know about it?"

"That's all I know."

"You left Arlington at the spot where the argument took place?"

"Yes."

"Had you any suspicion that someone else might have been near in the fog?"

"Yes. But there was nothing to confirm it. It may have been due simply to my fear that someone might overhear us."

"And you have no idea what happened afterwards?"

Hilary raised her grey eyes and looked steadily at Storm Kennedy.

"On my word of honour, none whatever."

. . . A zigzag of lightning split the darkness, followed by an angry roll of thunder over the hills.

Chief Inspector McGraw stood at the partly opened window, his hands clasped behind him.

He was watching torrents of rain turn the terrace and steps into racing rivulets and tumbling cascades, watching that blackly frowning cloud low over a distant slope from which the once great abbey of d'Angauverre had ruled the valley. He spoke without turning.

"Lady Hilary's story sounds straightforward enough. Pity there was no witness."

"But there may have been."

As Storm Kennedy made this retort, McGraw turned.

His expression, in the semi-darkness, his back now to the window, was indecipherable.

"Such as?"

"That remains to be proved. She mentioned a distinct impression that someone else was near, hidden in the fog."

McGraw shrugged.

Storm Kennedy inhaled deeply.

"You mean, Chief Inspector, that you are rejecting Lady Hilary's evidence?"

"Not rejecting it. What a court of law would accept, *I'm* prepared to accept. Her evidence is unsupported. You're implying, I take it, that the story of the theft of the Mecca relic suggests that it might be the work of a fanatic?"

"It's not impossible."

McGraw beckoned to Sample.

"Get Mr. Ibn Lahûn." He added, as Sample went out: "I don't want to suggest antagonism, Mr. Kennedy. Nobody will be happier than I if Lady Hilary is cleared of suspicion. It'll be hard luck for me if I have to charge her. Lord Glengale is here—with her at the moment."

Kennedy said nothing.

A few minutes later, Mohammed Ibn Lahûn entered with Sergeant Sample. The sergeant's expression was one appropriate to a chief mourner.

"Ah, Mr. Ibn Lahûn"—McGraw indicated the couch by the door—"please sit down. We think you may be able to help."

"All life is service," the Egyptian stated, placidly seating himself. "But many serve evil causes."

The chief inspector's angular jaws began to work automatically; and Kennedy wondered, as others had wondered, what McGraw chewed.

AT length, McGraw said: "You told me, not so long ago, that Arlington was beneath any consideration by the Moslem world. Recent evidence suggests that the knife, or dagger, found beside his body, is a holy relic which he stole from Mecca, and which belonged to the Prophet's wife. Did you know that?"

Mohammed extended slender palms.

"I know that this is not true, sir. Certain possessions of the Prophet (may God be good to him) remain in the custody of those charged with their safe keeping, in Mecca, El Medineh, Damascus and elsewhere. The dagger of which you speak is not one of these."

"Sure?"

"I am well acquainted with all the holy relics, sir. I would also beg to draw your attention to this fact: If recovery of the weapon had been the assassin's motive, he would not have left it there."

"I had thought of that." McGraw glanced across at Kennedy. "Had you?"

"Certainly. But we must allow for some unexpected interference."

"Fate interfered, effendi," Mohammed assured him. "It was written when and how the man should die."

"It might be a good idea," McGraw suggested, "if you enlarged, somewhat, on your statement to Superintendent Croker. It's not clear to me what one of your type is doing here."

"Certainly." Mohammed inclined his head, courteously. "I am in England, sir, to attend a conference of those responsible for preserving the faith of Islâm. As an old friend of Mrs. Faraway's (we have corresponded ever since her visit to Egypt) I naturally called to pay my respects. She is, as you know, sir, very wealthy, but you may not know that she is also very unhappy. Mrs. Faraway confided to me her belief that her husband was entangled again. She believed, knowing something of those small powers with which the All Knowing has endowed me, that if I attended the party here I might perhaps discern the object of the Honourable Peter's affections. She wished to learn if the matter had grown serious enough to justify divorce."

"I didn't know it was as bad as that," Kennedy muttered.

"Laughter is sometimes a mask for sorrow." (Sergeant Sample sighed like a bellows.) "I learned that the Honourable Peter was seeking to induce the singer called Sidonia to accept his embraces. He pressed his attentions upon her so hotly that Mrs. Faraway departed, in just anger. I remained, to endeavour to pursue this unfortunate affair to its termination."

McGraw had closed his eyes. Now, he partly opened them.

"And what was its termination?"

"Unfortunately, sir, I lost sight, both of Mr. Faraway and of Sidonia. But I believe the damsel rejected his love. Possibly he failed to offer suitable gifts."

"Quite likely," McGraw agreed. "About these powers to which you referred, Mr. Ibn Lahûn. Have they helped you to learn anything more definite than that those I believe guilty are, in fact, innocent, and so on?"

"Many things, sir. The singing woman is without guilt in this matter."

"You think so, too?"

"Lady Hilary Bruton can be cleared of suspicion by one person, alone. I have already advised this person to tell the truth."

"To what person do you refer?" Storm Kennedy asked rapidly.

"To Mrs. Muller, effendi."

"*Mrs. Muller!*"

Chief Inspector McGraw, hands on the desk, began to stand up, his fawn eyes fixed in a stare almost of ferocity upon the Egyptian's face. Kennedy suppressed an exclamation, took a step forward.

"I don't know what has led Mr. Ibn Lahûn to this remarkable conclusion, Chief Inspector. But I have certain evidence to support it. May I suggest that we ask Mrs. Muller a few questions?"

McGraw sat down again.

"Mrs. Muller is on her way to London. . . ."

HANGOVER HOUSE became a centre of urgent activity. An emergency call had been sent out to intercept Mrs. Muller. Sergeant Sample sped north in the Yard car in an endeavour to overtake her.

And Chief Inspector McGraw was deeply dissatisfied with himself.

He stood staring from the window, his gaze following that angry cloud moving eastward and away to an accompaniment of drum rolls. Sunshine peeped nervously over its ominous shoulder. Rain continued to fall, but softly now. He spoke without turning.

"I want to get the facts straight, Kennedy. Make sure I haven't been wearing smoked glasses. When you walked down the garden and came out behind the summer-house you weren't heading that way *deliberately*?"

"Not at all." Kennedy thought for a

Continued on page 24

NOW YOU KNOW

BUYING SHOES TO MATCH your clothes is fine—but do your shoes match your feet?

Slipping shoes off in the cinema, toe-wriggling, and "resting up" by placing the sides of the shoe on the ground are all omens of ill-shod feet—the cause of most foot trouble.

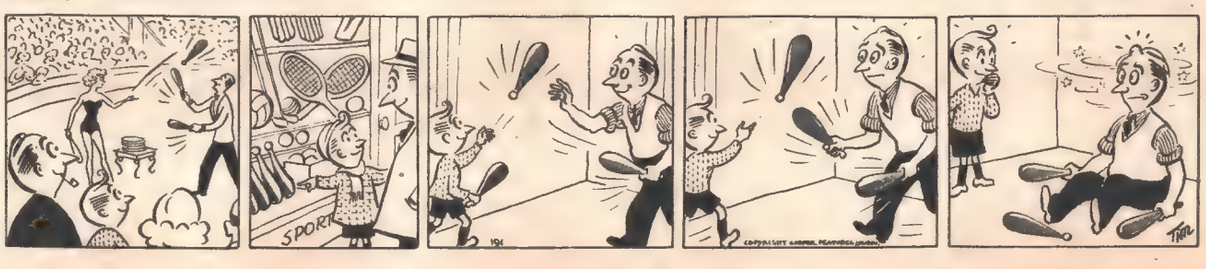
Your old shoes tell a tale, too. If the tips of the sole wear out before the rest of the shoe, then your shoes are too short. Do the uppers bulge out over the edge of the sole? Are there hollows in the lining by the toes? Then your shoes are too narrow.

Feet that are soft and pliable, and feet that have little protective covering of flesh need special care in fitting. Don't go shoe-shopping when your feet are tired—because shoes that are comfortable in the shop may prove too large next time you try them on.

That all new shoes are uncomfortable until they've been broken in, is a fallacy. If they need breaking in—they don't fit.

OH, JOHNNY!

by TIM



Lacrosse has no offside rule and play doesn't stop when the ball goes behind the goal. Goal umpire here is lacrosse organizer Arthur Mollett

Game the Redskins taught us

by NORMAN PHILLIPS

Men's lacrosse is fast, tough, looks like rugby played with baggy tennis racquets—and has nothing to do with the gentle pat-ball version they play in girls' schools

THE ONLY GAME OVER which the English—quite literally—have lost their heads is the North American Indian pastime of baggataway, the sport that is now called lacrosse.

The first record of Britons watching the game dates back to 1763. The scene was Fort Michilimackinac, a lonely trading post on the Canadian Great Lakes. The day was the birthday of King George III, and Chief Pontiac's Redskins invited the garrison to leave their stockade and learn about lacrosse.

The British were fascinated. Not until the ball sailed over the wall and into the fort did they realize what was happening. The Indians, who had planned this as a signal for an uprising, grabbed hatchets from their stolid, blanket-clad squaws, seized the fort and massacred the garrison.

Speed, action and modified mayhem are still the trademarks of lacrosse, but Englishmen can now watch the game without fear of losing their scalps. This year—thanks to a series of demonstrations—more people than ever are following the game that looks a little like rugger played with baggy tennis racquets.

As eager as any of Pontiac's tribesmen to stage a lacrosse demonstration is strapping, six-foot Arthur Mollett, an otherwise staid insurance broker of Beckenham, Kent. As secretary of the South of England Men's Lacrosse Association, Mollett spends most of his spare time winning converts.

Lacrosse has been Mollett's speciality since he was a boy at St. Dunstan's College, Catford. He married a lacrosse player and his five-year-old youngster already knows how to handle one of the dozens of hickory sticks stored under the roof of their suburban garage.

Each stick has a triangular webbed pocket with which lacrosseurs catch, cradle or hurl a hard, yellow, rubber ball about the size of the one used in cricket. The ball, which can travel faster than a well-hit cricket ball, is, in itself, quite a missile.

More damage can be inflicted with the four-foot or longer stick which gives the sport its name. A misguided Frenchman thought the stick resembled a bishop's crozier and called the game *la crosse*. In use, the crosse is more like a tomahawk and is an essential feature of the legalized assault and battery which distinguishes the game from the gentler version played by women.

Brought Down Fence

"The women," Mollett says, "just pass the ball to each other. The real game calls for good, solid body-checking as well as team play."

Checking in a recent game between Oxford and Buckhurst Hill was rugged enough to bring down a good portion of the fence. The damage was done in a struggle for possession of the ball. The incident appealed to the blood lust of the crowd and brought forth as many cheers as spectacular passing play.

"English crowds like the action," Mollett says, "but they are not so bloodthirsty as the Indians. In the old days, if any of the players showed signs of flagging, the squaws would dash on the field and beat the tired men with switches."

In those days the Indians set their goals as far as a mile apart. The modern goals, with their six-foot square mouths, are only ninety yards distant, a change which has, if anything, intensified the action.

Speed is achieved by the omission of any offside rules—a factor that reduces whistle-blowing and simplifies the task of the referee. This individual is called on to do more running than anyone else on the field to keep up with the play.

"One sixty or seventy yard pass can switch the play from one end of the field to the other and there's only one referee," Mollett explains. He has finished many a match with scarcely enough wind to blow the final whistle.

The referee is also charged with keeping the cudgelling of the ball-carrier to a respectable minimum. The rules permit downward slashing at the stick of the man with the ball. They forbid upward blows or hug-checking, which involves wrapping a stick around the opponent's crosse and, incidentally, around his neck.

Oddly enough, the game results in few injuries. In twenty-seven years' play, Mollett suffered only one bruise over the eye and a few scraped fingers. Ironically, his playing days were ended by a trick knee given him by rugger.

Canadians and Americans permit the uppercut checking, but they wear far more padding than the English teams. This was obvious at last year's Olympics when an epic struggle ended in a 5—5 draw between an English side and the Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, representing the U.S.A.

The American team trotted on the field equipped with knee and elbow pads and wearing electric-blue leather-padded helmets with wire masks which covered the entire face. The Englishmen, armed only with their sticks, looked like early Christians going in to meet the gladiators.

Fastest Game?

The 60,000 spectators at Wembley had come to see athletics. They stayed to cheer lacrosse. The same thing happened at Twickenham last spring, when Mollett sandwiched a demonstration game in between rugger matches.

"Lacrosse is the fastest game on two feet," Mollett claims. "People are always astounded by the long passes and by the almost continuous play."

The game starts at centrefield where the opposing centres place their sticks on the ground, back to back, with the ball in between them. The whistle starts the scramble for the ball, which the centre tries to pass to one of his eleven team mates.

The tactics of the game call for team work in the form of a series of short, sharp passes rather than longer throws which can be intercepted. Stick-handling is the key to bringing the ball within scoring range and the

ability to handle a stick doesn't just mean being able to catch or pass the ball. Players must be able to hold on to the ball even with an opponent hacking at them.

The English player's idea of self-protection is a pair of padded gloves and a crocheted cap with a long, jockey-style peak. The purpose of this peak is to deflect a random blow from changing the contours of the nose. It is much better at keeping the sun out of the eyes.

Only the goalkeeper wears pads on the body. He is also equipped with a much larger stick but these defensive measures are of little value unless he possesses keen eyesight. The goalkeeper's vision must be good enough to watch the ball pass from player to player, a feat that is not easy at close quarters where the view is obscured by a mêlée of flailing sticks.

The most important fixture of the year is the North versus South match, and, since 1877, the South have only been able to win on four occasions. Their last triumph was in 1902.

Northern supremacy is traditional, according to Mollett, because more schools in the north play the game. This is a situation which the south is anxious to correct. Mollett's programme of demonstrations for schools, youth clubs and Boy Scout groups is designed to do just this.

Took Tribal Names

Mollett also looks to the universities for help in building up the game. Undergraduate players who take up teaching are counted on to spread lacrosse in the schools. A promising sign this season is the emergence of a Nottingham University side.

Lacrosse is an institution at both Oxford and Cambridge, where half-blues are awarded to members of the varsity teams. The reserve sides are known, respectively, as the Iroquois and Eagles—the only English teams to adopt tribal affiliations.

Rivalry runs highest in the inter-varsity matches, which sometimes take on an international aspect. Last year's Oxford side included Americans, Canadians and an Australian, and past Oxford teams have had such stars as the Canadian Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Hon. L. B. "Mike" Pearson.

"Mike Pearson," says one of his Oxford team mates, "had the extraordinary ability to make his opponent move first. It is a knack that should serve him well in politics."

Other Canadian stars who have promoted the game in Britain include such picturesque characters as Wild-Wind, Great-Arm, Scattered-Branches, Crossing-the-River, Hole-in-the-Sky and Pick-the-Feather. They were all Iroquois Indians who invaded this country in the eighties.

"They made a tremendous impression," Mollett says. "Clubs sprang up in their wake and league competition began. Our association was formed five years before the Football League got started."

World Tours Ahead?

Canadians also spread the game to Australia and lacrosseurs like Mollett dream of international fixtures between England, U.S.A., Canada and Australia. The English Lacrosse Union has already sent its secretary, G. H. Bark, of Worthing, to North America on a scouting expedition which may lead to more international tours.

Visiting teams — from the original Iroquois to the recent Olympics—have helped recruit new followers by dispelling the unfortunate notion that men's lacrosse is the same game as that played at girls' boarding schools.

Cost of equipment and the difficulty of importing it is still a handicap. Sticks still come from Cornwall, Ontario, in the heart of the region where the Redskins first played the game.

A good crosse costs upwards of £2—four times the prewar price. Lacrosse shoes—canvas uppers with rubber studded soles—have also been difficult to obtain.

The specially designed shoes explain why lacrosse, Canada's national summer pastime, is played at Lord's and Old Trafford, the shrines of England's national game, cricket. Lacrosse players do not dig up the turf the way rugger or soccer players do.

Invented Portable Goal

To protect the almost sacred turf of these playing-fields, Mollett has invented a portable goal. It is designed to rest on top of the ground and does not need sunken goalposts. The Mollett goal, inspired by ice hockey nets, has a supporting flange which keeps it upright even when players crash into the nets.

Special funds are set aside by the association to subsidize the purchase of equipment for new teams.

"Give a boy a stick and a ball," Mollett declares, "and within half an hour he can learn the fundamentals of the game. One thing the spectators always applaud is a long pass. Such a pass is one of the simplest things about the game."

Once he gets a lad interested, Mollett lets the game do the rest. Having played soccer, rugger and tennis as well as lacrosse, he believes the Indian pastime has the greatest appeal.

"No, no, no! It's black with a shiny peak and a sort of hook thing on the front with gold leaves round it"

Choosing one's ideal wife

by HERBERT HODGE

HE WAS HOLDING FORTH in the pub—a tall, lean, elderly chap, the old-fashioned sergeant-major type, with ruby nose, ramrod back and a magnificent Boer War moustache. He was telling us about his son.

"The blinking fool!" he said, or words to that effect. "The times I've told him what to do with women! Love 'em and leave 'em, I've said. That's the only sensible way for a man to tackle women. And now the silly young perisher's gone and got married—gone and put the rope round his neck!"

We solemnly nodded our approval of these sentiments, as men usually do when safe in men's company.

He favoured us with a little more manly wisdom in the same strain; then finished his drink, twirled his moustache, and marched out with the swagger proper to such a conquering old hero.

After which, the others informed me that he'd recently got married again himself—for the third time.

What that proved I don't know. Unless it was that there were women in the world whose disapproving look could take the curl out of even that moustache—a picture no man likes to contemplate. But the purpose he served at that particular moment was to set us talking about women; and—since we were all old enough to realize that complete escape for a man is impossible—the best kind of woman for a man to live with.

"Yes, Dear" Type

Of course, when a married man's asked about his ideal woman in mixed company, he can only reply: "The one I've got"—in case his wife gets to hear of it. But when you're all men together, you can safely speak your mind. And I noticed that no one paused to consider whether the kind of wife he thought he'd like best was really the wife who was best for him. Or isn't there any difference?

It seems to me there's probably a big difference — because most of the men present fancied the "yes, dear" type; the wife who would always agree with them.

As a young man I used to think along those lines myself. My ideal girl was a girl who never argued — a girl who simply gloried in the wonder of my companionship and whose chief expression was one of delighted gratitude; a girl who didn't mind where we went, or what we did, or how we spent our time, so long as she was pleasing me.

Looking back, it's astonishing what a lot of girls there seemed to be like that when I was young—girls who even agreed with me about a woman's right to equality (after I'd explained it to them) and cheerfully paid for themselves at the pictures.

I've often wondered if these girls went on behaving in the same way after they were married. I never found out, because I never married one. The fact was I got a bit tired of being always agreed with. It sounds perfect in theory, I know; but in practice there's no companion so dull as the girl who always says, "Yes, dear"; or, when pressed for her own opinion, "I'll do whatever you say."

But, of course, there are far worse kinds. There's the girl who expects a man to do nothing except tell her about her wonderful self. That kind of girl never put up with me for very long. I wasn't able to live up to her expectations—though, oddly enough, she was just the kind of girl I was apt to admire most.

Woman's Secret Hope

Then there's the girl (and the woman) who expects a man to stride about the world, choking off—if not actually bumping off—everybody who dares to annoy her. I believe nearly every woman secretly hopes for a man who will do that. It must be a terrible disappointment for women when they discover that most men feel this is too much trouble.

Every husband, I suppose, turns out to be a disappointment to his wife, sooner or later. Women are apt to expect so much from marriage. A man, on the other hand, usually enters into marriage rather doubtfully — hoping for the best but fearing the worst. The result is, he's often pleasantly surprised—discovering qualities in his wife when she's put to the test that he never dreamed were there.

When it comes to the ideal husband, I find most of the experienced married women I've talked to dream of the "good provider"; the man who *always* brings home the money and never gets the sack—except, of course, the women who've already got a man like that. They're usually quite content with the money side of it, but they often feel the man himself is a bit dull.

The truth is, I suppose, that none of us really know what we want in a husband or a wife. If we marry successfully, it's one of those lucky accidents. Or is it our subconscious selves choosing the right mate—even against our conscious judgment?

William Blake put his finger on the root of it, I think, when he wrote:

What is it men in women do require?
The lineaments of gratified desire.
What is it women do in men require?
The lineaments of gratified desire.

Given that, I believe a couple can disagree about everything else and still be all in all to each other.

MY LIFE (10)

Wilfred Pickles continues his fascinating life story, which is being exclusively serialized in John Bull . . . Blackpool was the place where his family took its annual week's holiday when he was a boy. During the war Pickles goes back there—now famous

by WILFRED PICKLES

Back to Blackpool— Top of the Bill

What a build-up! And then came a technical hitch

From the Pickles album: Wilfred (driver's seat), Mabel (next to Dagenham two-striper) and Blackpool "turns"

AFTER SNATCHING ONE quiet week-end at home, Mabel and I set out again, this time for Cambridge and the aerodromes and Army camps that had mushroomed round the ancient town. With me at the top of the E.N.S.A. bill for the tour was that attractive, pleasant, and, we were soon to discover, wholly sincere personality—Vera Lynn.

In her sincerity she reminded me of another artist I had known and admired for years, Donald Peers. As an announcer I had introduced him in many programmes.

He had told me of his humble origin and his early struggles and I advised him, "Keep just as you are. Don't alter your style. One day you'll be the Bing Crosby of Great Britain."

Like Donald, Vera sang popular songs with such feeling that the fighting men scattered all over the world took her to their hearts. When Vera visited hospitals and then, on the Forces programme, told the fighting men about their new babies, she was not merely reading a script, she really saw every child she talked about—and took flowers to all the mothers.

Some people scoffed at this programme but to Vera it was a genuine job. And she did it well.

It Took Me Back

Our first month with the troops at an end, Mabel and I again found ourselves leaving Manchester, and as we squeezed on board the Blackpool train at Victoria Station I had some difficulty with our heavy luggage. As well as two huge wardrobe trunks, on which my name was painted in vivid red, we had suitcases and a leather-handled bag.

"All right, chum," said a voice from behind, and I looked round to see a soldier stooping to get hold of one of the cases. "Thanks very much," I said, and I reflected on those exciting days so many years ago when my mother faced the job of packing for a week's holiday.

What would she have thought if, like Mabel, she had to pack for eighteen weeks? Eighteen weeks! It was almost like emigrating.

I was again reminded of those boyhood trips to the seaside as we sat on our cases in the corridor, for a little boy in a bright Fair Isle jersey pressed his face against a window to see as far ahead as possible. "We'll soon be in Blackpool," he told me with an air of authority.

There were touching, intimate scenes as our contingent poured off the platform. Airmen and soldiers dashed forward to embrace wives and sweethearts visiting them for a weekend.

My little friend of the train corridor was tripping along by his mother's side when he suddenly saw his father, who was in the uniform of one of the regiments of the line; and his father caught him and swung him high into the air. As the three of them went happily off the station, they did not seem to notice the huge double crown poster opposite, loudly proclaiming:

George Black's Summer Show
"We're All In It"
with
Wilfred Pickles
Rawicz and Landauer
Jewel and Warriss
Elisabeth Welch
Steffani's Silver Songsters; Tommy Jover
Nena and Raff; Charles Warren and Jean;
Phyllis Hunter; and the Dagenham Girl Pipers

Seeing this enormous billing made me wonder whether I could live up to the reputation that my performance in John Sharman's *Music Hall* had given me, whether I would get the same laughs, the same welcome.

I was still wondering, but more anxiously, as I stood in the wings on the opening night and heard the orchestra and the chorus and the tumult of clapping from the three thousand people in the theatre. Nervously, I adjusted my tie.

Mabel, noticing my shakiness, asked: "Are you all right?"

"No, I—I think I'm going to faint," I said.

"For heaven's sake don't do it here—you're on!" Mabel urged. Some of her determination seemed to be passed on to me in that moment; certainly the tension was eased.

My remark duly reached the newspapers, but they quoted Mabel as saying: "Just remember there's a big Blackpool audience out there waiting for you!"

If she had indeed said that, the reporters might have had a more sensational story!

Oh, That Microphone!

It was a typical first night. I heard the chorus singing the number by which I was introduced. In the middle of the vocal all the girls on the stage leaned forward urgently with their hands cupped against their ears in an attitude of listening.

The music stopped suddenly to give me my cue to say through a microphone off-stage: "This is the B.B.C. Home and Forces programme. Here is the news and by gum this is Wilfred Pickles reading it." What a build-up! But at the crucial moment the microphone went dead!

The audience was left bewildered as to what the pause and the ear-cupping attitude of the girls might represent and I made my entrance to a stony silence, my impressive introduction lost. After all, why should these people know me?

But as soon as I opened my mouth and said, "Ow do, 'ow are yer?" the audience rose and gave me a terrific ovation. My doubts fell away. Confidence surged.

And who could know that in the obscurity of the wings only six yards away from me, Mabel was giving way to the pent-up feelings she had endured in trying to bolster my morale in the agonizing moment of the death of the "mike," and during my entrance? As she heard the audience respond she burst into tears.

The whole show was a success. It brought thousands into the theatre and I believe I am right in saying that the record of packed houses it established still stands today.

All the artists worked as a team and I never heard a cross word throughout the run of the show. Nobody missed a performance, nobody missed an entrance.

This spirit was so clearly the main factor in the success of *We're All In It* that we organized a party on the last night for the whole company in one of the Winter Garden reception rooms. There were special programmes which bore the title, *We're All Out of It*, and

everybody who had anything to do with the show was invited.

The principals contributed £5 each to the cost of the celebration and George Black came along with a cheque for £50. We even got £25 from the business-like Tower Company which runs the Opera House.

It was a happy, almost a family affair. When the party broke up about midnight, Mabel and I walked back along the front with Ben Warriss, who was staying at the same hotel. All of us felt vaguely that we were writing "finis" to a really outstanding chapter in our experience.

A psychologist might conclude that the escapade we hatched in the following half hour had something to do with a desire on our parts to mark such a happy period with a milestone.

With the holiday season running out at this time the hotel was packed with business men. There was nobody about and not a sound to be heard when we reached the hotel.

Idly, Ben looked at the board on which the now slumbering men had marked their "calls" for the morning. He beckoned us over and his eyes twinkled mischievously.

"Who don't you like?" he asked.

"Number 43," I said, offhand.

"Right," he said. "Number 43. Eight o'clock call and the *Daily Telegraph*, eh?" He deleted this and substituted: "Nine thirty. Glass of water. *Woman's Companion.*"

I saw what a great idea it was and joined Ben in altering more of the calls. We put them all back an hour or more and where *The Times*, the *Manchester Guardian* or the *Daily Telegraph* was asked for we wrote in their places the names of such publications as the *Westmorland Gazette*, the *Accrington Observer* and *Health and Strength*. One or two business men were awakened to find themselves face to face with a bottle of Bass.

Mabel thought we had gone far enough when we wrote out these mythical orders. "Come on to bed," she said.

In the morning chaos reigned.

Mabel, Ben and I went about with exaggerated expressions of innocence and enjoyed listening to the puzzled speculations of the guests as they stood astride their brief-cases in the lounge. Right in the middle stood the manager surrounded by harassed-looking business men.

"Of course, we don't know. But we suspect those two so-called comedians over there." He indicated Ben and me.

Instantly we went over to the group of men, admitted our guilt, apologized, and invited them over to the bar, where the whole thing ended with a big laugh all round.

My Panto Disappointment

The plan unfolded by Julius Darewski several months earlier took shape. From Blackpool we started a tour of the music halls that was to carry us all over the country and give us a rare glimpse into the way variety artists live and work—but mostly work!

Then we went to Liverpool for my pantomime engagement as "Pickles the Page" in Tom Arnold's *The Sleeping Beauty*. But even with Douglas Byng as the Dame and Tessa Dean as Principal Boy, the pantomime was nothing like the success of the revue at Blackpool Opera House.

It lacked production. What it needed was the imagination and the decisiveness of the late George Black who had personally handled the Blackpool show, going up on the stage to give advice to everybody.

We had little time to plan our way ahead, but we realized that wherever future engagements lay, we needed somewhere to live in London. I was playing

Pickles as Sgt. Hardacre: "I was nervy about acting 'straight'"

music halls in the South and the B.B.C. in London was using me regularly.

Luckily, we got just what we wanted in a ground floor flat in Devonshire Street and by transferring some of our furniture from Manchester and picking up a few pieces in London, we soon made it as cosy as all our homes had been.

We had all the gas fires taken out and looked forward to the evenings we would be spending in London—close to a good old coal fire! No more hotels! A home from home in the heart of London!

The flat soon became a sort of oasis of warmth, comfort and, more particularly, quietness; for although four flats above were all occupied, we rarely saw the tenants and even now we don't know them.

From time to time we have met and exchanged formal greetings. Mabel and I know the names on the brass plates outside the front door but when we say "Good morning" we have no idea whether the man we speak to is Mr. Jackson or Dr. Roberts.

This reserve, so characteristic of London life and which made us yearn for the North so much during the war, has its points. It needed a lot of getting used to; but now when we want a bit of peace and quietness we retire to our flat in the hub of the West End! And we appreciate the seclusion.

I Succeed Robert Donat

One night while we were staying at the flat, my agent telephoned to give us yet another surprise. He told me that Robert Donat was leaving *The Cure For Love*, Walter Greenwood's Lancashire comedy which was running at the Westminster Theatre. Was I interested in taking over the part, he wanted to know. Was I interested! Straight acting! This was indeed something I really wanted to do.

I was overwhelmed at the prospect of playing once again a leading part in a straight play after all these years and as I went to the theatre for an interview with the producer, I wondered what sort of reception I would get from that giant of the theatrical world, H. K. Ayliff, whose name I had known so long.

As I arrived at the theatre much too early for my appointment, I walked round the block of rather drab buildings three or four times, looking at my watch every few moments and becoming increasingly apprehensive about my capacity to play the part until, finally, I worked myself into such a state of uncertainty that I found I was half hoping that Ayliff would turn me down.

Even if he accepted me, I had an excuse: "Trouble with me is that I'm not big enough to play the soldier. Donat is fairly tall and would not look out of place as a sergeant. I wouldn't be right, especially as the fellow in the play is something of a boxer."

It came almost as a shock when I realized I had actually spoken these words to Ayliff. He sat on the corner of a desk in one of the offices in the theatre, dangling a leg and looking even taller than his six feet. I noted his gaunt, sharp features and the sunken face with its lines of good humour.

He waved an arm. "Ridiculous! We'll make you a lightweight, a feather-weight—or whatever they call them in that dreadful business!"

Ayliff stressed that I would have to learn and rehearse the part and be on the stage as Sergeant Hardacre in ten days. As I had grown so accustomed to radio scripts and to the individualistic methods of variety shows, I knew I would not find it easy to learn the part.

We arranged that I should start rehearsals at ten o'clock the following morning, and I went straight back to the flat to tell Mabel all about it.

She was delighted. "Sit down and talk," she said. "Lunch is nearly ready." And as Mabel busied herself in the kitchen, I explained about Ayliff and what he had told me about my new part and how I had to learn it in ten days.

Throughout the afternoon and evening, breaking off only to eat, we read and re-read the script and Mabel spoke every part except that of Sergeant Hardacre. I finished up sitting slantwise across a chair with my tie in a tight knot halfway down my chest, and I saw the script, now battered and curled up at the edges, through tired eyes.

"Let's chuck it and get to bed," I said at nearly one o'clock in the morning; but sleepy as I was, I kept thinking of Sergeant Hardacre's lines and vizualizing the plot in terms of events on a stage.

I tucked the script underneath the pillow and for a second wondered who it was told me years ago that by doing this one never forgot the lines one had learned the night before.

Night after night Mabel went through the play with me and by the end of the week she had lost her voice completely. I was already learning that the task of succeeding to the part was no less unenviable than I had imagined just before I met Ayliff.

After all, I was leaping into the midst of a polished West End company who had been together for almost four months. Absolute masters of their parts, they knew the play backwards.

Did I Look The Part?

Then came my first night. As I stood in the wings with a kitbag over one shoulder and a rifle slung over the other I wondered for a moment if I really looked like a homecoming sergeant. As the cue line approached I thought: "This is it," but my anxiety had given way to a confidence that had been inspired chiefly by the thoroughness of Ayliff's rehearsals. I felt comfortable on the stage, happy in the part, and I never forgot a word.

The audience called for a curtain speech. Mabel was overjoyed and Ayliff came round to the dressing-room and said: "Never alter it. Just keep it as it is!"

On one occasion I had to make a dash from the theatre to a B.B.C. studio to take part in an *In Town Tonight* interview. There was no time to throw off the sergeant's uniform or even remove my make-up.

As I careered into the building from which the broadcast was being made I noticed the look of astonishment spread over the face of a brigadier who was waiting in the hall. He prepared for an explanation—and a salute.

I could not resist, and as I sailed past him I said: "If tha thinks tha's got a salute coming, tha's had it!"

Something In The Wind

My radio and stage work went on side by side until one day towards the end of the run of *The Cure for Love* when Walter Greenwood asked me if I would consider a provincial tour.

I was impressed by the success of the London production and was on the point of agreeing when I thought of John Salt who, on his return from America, was settling down as programme director of the North Region, and had telephoned me a few days earlier to say he would like a long talk with me as he had an idea that we could do "an important programme" together. "You can bet he has something sound in mind," I said to Mabel.

Just how sound it was and how important a bearing it was to have on my future, we were not to know until much later.

NEXT WEEK: How "Have a Go!" started

★ 22 SET

A daily pleasure for years to come! Handsome leatherette-covered metal case with plated rims. Heavily plated Aristocrat one-piece razor with Gillette Dispenser holding 10 Blue Gillette Blades.

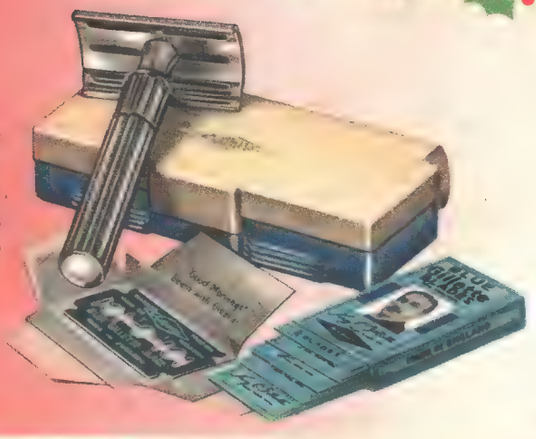
26/3 (*Inc. P. Tax*)

★ 53 SET

He'll mean his 'Thank you!' for this one. Attractive silver finish Aristocrat Junior one-piece razor and Gillette Dispenser holding 10 Blue Gillette Blades.

12/- (*Inc. P. Tax*)

Greet him with Gillette



27 SET

There's a big male vote for this! Highly polished nickel-plated Gillette razor with 5 Blue Gillette Blades in attractive two-colour plastic case. **5/-** (*Inc. P. Tax*)

★ These sets contain a Gillette one-piece razor and a Gillette Dispenser — the up-to-date system now making shaving easier than ever before.

Help him to save time in the morning — with the Gillette Dispenser. It is a neat plastic container which holds 20 Blue Gillette Blades, unwrapped and ready for use. **5/4** (*Inc. P. Tax*)

Gillette Shaving Brushes are back again—**7/6** & **48/6** (*Inc. P. Tax*)

BIRO SOLVES THE CHRISTMAS GIFT PROBLEM

Here is the range of Biro Models. Amongst them you are sure to find a "just-right" gift for all your friends at the price you want to pay.

BIRO DE LUXE

A truly magnificent pen in grey, black or maroon with cap and mountings in gold on solid silver. Styled by Asprey's of Bond Street with their traditional skill, Biro de Luxe is a gift that conveys in gracious manner the depth of your regard and good wishes.

PRICE £5.15.0

THE NEW BIRO

The new Biro appeals to everybody and this makes a gift that cannot fail to give pleasure. Its graceful styling and pleasing colours—grey, black, maroon—are as modern as they are attractive. A non-slip clip holds the pen securely but allows easy withdrawal.

PRICE 25/8

BIROMATIC

The Biro without a cap and with the writing point concealed in the barrel. Gentle pressure on the stud until you hear a click brings the nib into writing position. A further pressure and the nib retracts. This very handsome model is available in two finishes.

Rolled Gold 45/-

Rhodium Plated 29/4

BIROETTE

Probably one of the most popular and handy Biro models yet produced. It is slim, elegant and neat. For a man's vest pocket or a lady's handbag it is positively ideal. You can choose from colours—blue, grey, maroon and black, each embellished with a metal cap in gleaming silvery argenite.

PRICE 13/9

BIRO-QUILL

Your friends will be delighted to receive this gay gift especially as it is useful as well as ornamental. The Biro-quill brings colour into any room and there are six bright colours to choose from—red, green, mauve, dark blue, light blue and yellow. Firmly cemented in the hollow of the quill is a Biro refill.

PRICE 3/8

BIRO MINOR

Millions of writers use Biro Minor all day and every day. You can be sure, therefore, that the gift of a Biro Minor is always welcome. Even more so is a set of four in their bright colours—blue, green, red, black—on an attractive Handy Stand. Refills are available with inks to match the colours of the case.

BALITA

This is unique—Biro ball-point writing combined with an automatic lighter. It makes a most unusual and attractive gift. The unbreakable metal case in which the pen nib is hidden away also houses the lighter. A flick brings the nib out ready for writing and another flick sends it back.

PRICE 22/-

PRICE PER MINOR 4/1½

Set of Four **16/6**

Handy Stand **2/9**

Biro REGD.

pens for your Christmas thoughts

Manufactured by The Miles-Martin Pen Co. Ltd.

HANGOVER HOUSE

Continued from page 18

while. "I was just walking and thinking."

"Is that so? You saw somebody moving in there, through a crack in the back wall and took a good look. It was Mrs. Muller. Searching for something under the seat where you'd found the gold case."

"Exactly."

"At this moment she was disturbed by the appearance of Mohammed. She gave up the search. You *think* before he caught her at it? They walked off together."

"Yes."

"You stepped in. Among a lot of dust and rubbish you found these." McGraw pointed to two objects which Kennedy had given him earlier. "It didn't make sense at the time. I couldn't get the connection. But that's where you'd found the gold case, and you assumed the gold case to be the thing Mrs. Muller was looking for."

"Naturally."

McGraw nodded. He had resumed chewing.

Kennedy went on: "I was trying to think of some way to confirm what was no more than a strong suspicion. You see, I didn't know what the gold case contained. What I found, this second time under the seat, suggested no association. It might have had none. I had nothing to go upon, really, except the fact that Mrs. Muller had been searching there. *She* didn't know—but she may have suspected—that the gold case had been found. I argued that she wanted to make sure. Inference—that she had hidden it there herself."

McGraw nodded.

"Fair enough. Now, what you found was a small, empty phial. The kind chemists use to put up a hypodermic shot. Also a moistened swab smelling of iodine. A conjurer from Kings Riding opened the gold case. . . . There was a hypodermic syringe inside—and a place to hold the charge. It smelled of iodine, too."

STORM KENNEDY became conscious of excitement so intense that it was hard to control. "Which answers the simple question I told you I wanted to ask. The question was, what did the case contain?"

"We know now. Arlington got the shot all right. Hospital reports evidence on the left arm. Someone crept up to that room where he lay, opened the gold case and made an injection. And the same prints were on the phial," McGraw added, "as on the syringe and window frame."

"What kind of prints? I thought that Wilson reported they were illegible."

"Most of them were. But they have one common factor. They all show marks of some sort of fine-meshed material."

McGraw paused, stared at Kennedy. "On the syringe and phial these are the *only marks*."

"Looks like a laboratory job."

"It is. The same with the drug used. But the autopsy may trace that."

"Have you any theory, Chief Inspector, to account for these marks?"

"Yes." McGraw leaned back, wearily closing his eyes. "I owe the idea to Sergeant Sample. It didn't germinate until Mrs. Muller was pushed into the limelight. I'm going to try a little experiment. . . ."

When Storm Kennedy had gone, McGraw took a call from Scotland Yard which seemed to be of surprising importance. He made detailed notes before hanging up; then sat, eyes closed again, for fully five minutes, chewing meditatively.

Storm Kennedy learned from Inspector Hawley that Lord Glengale was still with Hilary, and he decided not to intrude upon this family conference. A disclosure of the new facts which had come to light would be premature in any case. These facts had to be measured and tested.

He was back with McGraw in the relic-lined study, with its odour of ancient decay, a room which would haunt his dreams, when Inspector Hawley rapped on the door and announced:

"Mrs. Muller is here, Chief Inspector."

Storm Kennedy had been staring out of the window, which he had fully opened to enjoy the fragrance of the garden fresh from a rain bath. He turned as Mrs. Muller came in. She wore her long mink wrap. Her face was pale. Sergeant Sample followed.

She ignored Kennedy, fixing a gaze of narrowed dark eyes upon McGraw. The desk lamp was still alight.

Kennedy noted that the usually courteous chief inspector did not stand up. He merely pointed to the chair set facing his own.

"Please take a seat, Mrs. Muller."

MRS. MULLER stood still for a moment, watching him. "May I ask why I have been brought back here?" she demanded.

She threw off her mink wrap. Storm Kennedy automatically stepped forward and draped it over the back of her chair. He observed, as she lifted her arms, that she had put on the gloves which formed part of that wine-coloured ensemble worn at the party.

McGraw, from a desk drawer, took out the gold case. Storm Kennedy noted that he held it delicately by one end. The chief inspector offered the case to Mrs. Muller.

"Be good enough to tell me if you recognize this."

She accepted it calmly, turned it over between flexible fingers, and bent to peer at it—closed, as when it was found. Mrs. Muller's hands were quite steady.

"I don't Inspector." She returned the case. "What is it—a pen?"

"No." McGraw took it gingerly by the tip. He turned to Sample. "Pass this back to Wilson, upstairs."

Sample accepted the exhibit by its other end and went up the short stair to disappear into that arched opening which led to Larkhall Pike's sleeping cell. McGraw closed his eyes and lay back in his chair as if deep in thought. But Storm Kennedy knew that he was waiting for Sample's return before continuing the cross-examination.

Outside, moisture dripped reluctantly

THE HUMAN MACHINE

Be Yourself

"EVERY man," wrote Boswell, Dr. Johnson's famous biographer, "should form such a plan of living as he can execute completely. Let him not draw an outline wider than he can fill up."

It would be hard to find a better recipe for achieving happiness and avoiding unhappiness.

A full life is something everyone can attain: but the important thing is to keep desires within the limits of one's abilities.

Contentment means cutting down the number of wants. Nothing is more destructive of happiness than a perpetual attack of the "gimmes."

Boswell's words could almost be translated into: "Live your own life and don't try to live other people's."

It's strange how many people fail to realize that their unhappiness springs from failure to obey that simple rule.

by ROFFE THOMPSON

from leaves refreshed. A smell of wet loam competed with the tomb-like odours of the room. Mrs. Muller broke an oppressive silence.

"I still fail to understand, Inspector McGraw, why my journey to London has been interrupted."

"Do you?" McGraw leaned forward. "Mrs. Muller, come into the open. Give me the facts I want. It'll pay you better in the end."

For uncounted seconds the issue hung in the balance, and then just as Sample returned quietly to his place:

"I don't think I have any facts to give you," she said.

Sample cleared his throat.

"Sorry you think that." McGraw spoke in a low tone. "You wouldn't like to reconsider your answer? No. Very well." McGraw opened a desk drawer, taking out the swab and the phial on a sheet of white paper, which he placed on the blotting-pad. "I believe you mislaid these recently."

Mrs. Muller glanced hastily at them—and again Storm Kennedy observed a slight tremor of her lips. She shook her head.

"They are not mine. What led you to suppose they were?"

"They may not be yours," McGraw admitted. "But you used them recently."

"Used them? What for?"

The chief inspector laid a second sheet of paper on the desk.

"To charge this hypodermic syringe."

Mrs. Muller sat quite motionless and silent. She was still seated so when a red-headed policeman appeared on the stair. He coughed discreetly. McGraw glanced up.

"The same, sir."

McGraw merely nodded; and as Constable Wilson went upstairs again, the chief inspector did an odd thing.

He ceased to chew. From his mouth he took out a small piece of whatever he had been masticating and tossed the fragment into a waste basket. He glanced at Storm Kennedy.

"Putty rubber," he said. "One bit lasts me through the longest inquiry."

FROM a coat pocket he produced a huge briar pipe and a leather case on an equally outsize scale. When he had got the bowl filled to his satisfaction and the tobacco well alight, he lay back, puffing luxuriously.

Mrs. Muller watched him, in silence.

"I should hate to think," the chief inspector said, "that you're prepared to keep quiet, Mrs. Muller, and see an innocent girl accused of a crime she didn't commit."

"Why do you make such a suggestion?"

"Facts explain themselves. *Someone* murdered Geoffrey Arlington——"

"Geoffrey Arlington!"

"Name new to you? Or are you just surprised I know it?" But, as Mrs. Muller made no reply, McGraw continued: "As an old timer at this game, Mrs. Muller, I must say this: I've never met a cooler hand. You viewed the body; gave a convincing statement, to Superintendent Croker; walked out of this room without a stain on your character. You have declined to give *me* the facts. I shall now give the facts to *you*."

Mrs. Muller half rose from her chair. Storm Kennedy saw a flash of white teeth as she bit on that full underlip. Then came an interruption, excited voices outside the closed door.

"Please wait one moment——"

"Go to the devil!"

Suddenly, the door burst open and Lord Glengale came in, Inspector Hawley at his heels.

"Lord Glengale——" Hawley began.

McGraw signalled with his pipe, and Hawley retired, closing the door. Lord Glengale looked neither right nor left as he crossed to the desk, stared down at the chief inspector. He didn't appear to have noticed either Storm Kennedy or Mrs. Muller.

"Perhaps a little unceremonious," he remarked. "But my patience is exhausted. I have applied to that officer just gone out—without result. I'm tired of tomfoolery, sir. My daughter has given me a full account of what happened. In short, she knows nothing whatever about it—except that she had the misfortune to have been acquainted with that dead blackguard. Have I your permission to leave, with my daughter and Miss Elphinstowe?"

McGraw replaced his pipe between his teeth, the fawn eyes focused on the steely grey.

"I could answer your lordship in several ways. This is a criminal inquiry. I am in charge. Inspector Hawley was quite correct in declining to disturb me. Directly other witnesses are free to leave I shall be glad to advise you."

Lord Glengale remained perfectly still, stiffly upright.

McGraw puffed at his pipe. Sergeant Sample blew his nose. The marquess took a deep breath and stared angrily at Storm Kennedy. He stared at Mrs. Muller . . . and then stared harder, until suddenly:

"Got it!" he exploded. "I knew I'd seen you somewhere!"

Mrs. Muller, who had sunk back into her chair, looked up at him. Her expression was one impossible to define. McGraw fully opened his eyes which he had partly closed.

"Where did you meet Mrs. Muller?"

"Never met her. But I spotted her driving off a while back. Thought she looked vaguely familiar. Remember now where I saw her before—in Knightsbridge yesterday evening with that fellow Arlington. . . ."

Storm Kennedy stood again by the open window. He was listening to a diminishing drip of rain from foliage, to the sigh of earth drinking thirstily. Above these sounds he had detected the confident purr of an aristocratic engine. . . . It might be the Bentley. Or it might be the Rolls. One, certainly, had left.

For Lord Glengale had obtained McGraw's consent to take his departure (with Hilary and Elfie) shortly after his sensational identification of Mrs. Muller.

Now, he was gone—perhaps Hilary, too. No further sounds reached Kennedy's ears from the paved courtyard. Behind him, in the room, a throbbing silence had fallen. He wished he could have willed that it should never be broken, that he be spared witnessing the torture of a woman who, whatever her faults and follies, had high courage and a sense of humour. The smell of McGraw's strong tobacco annoyed him.

It was Mrs. Muller who had ended this suspense. And as she began to speak, Kennedy turned and watched her.

She was marble pale under the slight make-up she used, but her voice remained softly modulated, even, and quite without a tremor.

"You need not trouble to ask me any more questions, Inspector, unless to help. I will tell you everything. I know now how wrong I was not to tell you before. You meant to be kind."

THERE was a courageous frankness in her telling of the story which carried conviction. It was not in her make-up to adopt half measures. . . .

Mrs. Muller had been born in Beirut. Her father, at that time, was Italian consul, her mother, still living, was Syrian.

"You speak perfect English," McGraw commented.

"I was educated in England. Joan Corkoran—Mrs. Peter Faraway—and I were at the same school. But I had no invitation to come here. Joan didn't even know that I was in London. . . ."

She had lived with Geoffrey Arlington as his mistress for four years. Her husband, a German technician responsible for the maintenance of the pipelines which carry the Persian oil, had never divorced her. "He always said I should want to go back one day. Carl is a very sweet man. . . ."

It had not taken her long to find out that Geoffrey Arlington was an impostor. ("But it made no difference, even when I did find out. I still went on loving him.") While they were in Egypt he had news of the death of his wife, said to have been an invalid for years. Upon receiving this news he had suddenly decided to return to England. He was desperately hard up at the time.

"He was after the wife's estate?" McGraw suggested.

"No. She had nothing to leave. I suspected another motive. Not long after I went away with him he started a secret affair with an English girl. She was very young, pretty—and wealthy. He never knew I had found out. At first, I thought her money was the attraction. Then I began to be afraid, it lasted so long, that he was really in love with her. . . . It came to a head during a stay in the south of France. . . ."

PAUSING for a few moments, she went on: "I must make it clear that we never met. She had no idea of my existence. Then—they both disappeared for over a fortnight! But he returned, penitent, and full of lies. We left together for Egypt. I never saw Hilary Bruton again until I saw her here last night. You see—I knew he was coming to meet her."

McGraw, laying his pipe in an ashtray, inquired: "You listened-in to their phone conversation from an adjoining room?"

Mrs. Muller temporarily lost her composure.

"Yes. But how can you know?"

"Report from headquarters. Geoffrey Arlington (checked in as 'Mr. Geoffreys') had the room adjoining yours at the hotel. . . ."

They had flown to London from Paris. Lord Glengale must have passed by as they arrived. Geoffrey Arlington had had some mysterious business to transact in France before crossing on to England. Mrs. Muller had been unable to find out what it was. ("But I know it concerned Hilary Bruton.") On his bedside phone, Arlington had called a number; and Mrs. Muller, listening in a wardrobe closet of the room adjoining, had heard him talking to Hilary.

Hilary called him back at ten o'clock. He repeated the name, "Hangover House," and gave her directions on how to get there. Then he ordered a car from a firm he had often employed. He knocked on Mrs. Muller's door and said that he might be late.

"And *you* started," McGraw broke in, "at ten fifteen in a car from Auto-Hire. You got here first."

"I thought, now that he was free, he had come to ask her to marry him—and I meant to stay while Hilary Bruton stayed. I rarely let her out of my sight all night. I was still in the big room, at the piano, after nearly everyone had gone. Mr. Lovelace had persuaded me to play some ridiculous song, and Miss Elphinstowe came and joined us. She was so whimsically amiable that it occurred to me she might really be mounting guard. I said I must get my wrap, and I hurried off to the ladies' room."

Hilary was not in the ladies' room. But the glazed door was wide open. Mrs. Muller ran out on to the corner of the terrace, closing the door, then around to the front. She stood there, listening—and faintly heard Arlington's voice, and Hilary's. She made her way down the steps and down the lawn, guided by

Continued on page 27

"Short back and sides and lashin's of hair cream"

Dear Mum,

Here's wishing you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. After much thought and lots of well-meant suggestions from the boys about hot water bottles and china ornaments Jim said "Why don't we club together and send Grannie something really good; something she can keep and enjoy every day for years."

So here it is—

A Murphy portable that you can plug in anywhere—so you can carry it about from room to room, and have it in your bedroom if you want to have a Cosy Cosy in sometime

So cheerio until Boxing Day—about tea-time

Love from Kathie & Jim

PETER

John.

MURPHY U144
Mains Portable £14.1.1.
Including Purchase Tax.
Weekly or monthly payments arranged.

CRC 15H

Let's make it a marvellous party

Let's have MOUSSEC

and do the thing well

HANGOVER HOUSE

Continued from page 25

their voices. They were quarrelling furiously, somewhere quite near.

"Before I could get any closer, Hilary Bruton came running past. She didn't see me. I heard Geoffrey shouting, 'Larry! Larry!'"

Mrs. Muller ceased. Resting her elbows on the desk, she covered her face with gloved hands.

"Inspector McGraw!" It was an agonized appeal, a tremulous whisper. "As God is my judge, I meant him no harm. I—loved him. He burst suddenly out of the fog. He was in one of his mad rages. In his left hand he held something white. It may have been a handkerchief. In the other he had a short dagger." Mrs. Muller's tone grew more clear, except that now it held a note of restrained hysteria. "He saw me. I stood right in his path."

Again she fell silent, her head bowed in her hands. No one stirred until she went on:

"He used language so vile that—I must try to forget it. But I would not let him pass. . . . Until he threatened me with the knife. Then I ran back to the steps. There I turned and faced him again. He was breathing hoarsely. His eyes glared. He sprang on me. I caught his wrist, twisted it . . . and I felt the blade go into his body. He tripped and fell forward. And I ran round and in through the terrace door of the ladies' room."

The chief inspector knocked out and then carefully refilled his briar. Mrs. Muller lay back in her chair. Her pallor was alarming. Sergeant Sample cast sympathetic glances from time to time. McGraw, his pipe well going, dropped the match.

"This brings us to the final point. The gold case you handled, Mrs. Muller, had been cleaned and lightly powdered. Your gloves have a small, but distinctive pattern. From Paris?"

"Yes."

"You slipped up those stairs this morning"—he pointed—"while this room was empty, opened the case and took out the syringe. Same marks on all. Same on window frame. Did you charge the syringe and give an injection?"

"Yes." Mrs. Muller's voice, while steady again, was very low. "I hadn't time to relock the door. As it was, you nearly trapped me when I came down to put the key back. I had instinctively looked for it in the desk drawer. . . . I had tried to get to him during the night. But Mr. Pike is a light sleeper. I opened the window because my first idea was to throw the case out into the shrubbery. Although I wore gloves, my hands were hot and I was afraid fingerprints might be found if I left it there. Then I decided the shrubbery wasn't safe."

She tried to escape from Lovelace (who met her in the passage), and hurried down the garden, but knew he was following. Then she had enlisted Kennedy's services, asking him to detain her follower. Mrs. Muller knew, of course, that when the case was missed there would be a thorough investigation. As she passed the summer-house Sidonia called out to her. She had to go in and talk to her. Sidonia left when she had completed her make-up, and Mrs. Muller was wondering where to hide the case when she heard someone calling her name. She was afraid everybody was going to be searched—and threw the case under the seat.

"Why hadn't you replaced the container and the swab?" McGraw wanted to know.

"I had no time to get them back. I had wetted a handkerchief to moisten the swab and it had swelled. I threw those away as well."

"You went to look for them, later?"

"Twice. The first time Mohammed interrupted me. The second time was just before I left."

"How long had Geoffrey Arlington carried that case?"

"For three years. Ever since his first attack of catalepsy."

"Well, Mister Second Opinion. I was right. It *is* leprosy. I hope you're satisfied"

It was a strange story Mrs. Muller told, in an ever fading voice. Three years before, during a violent scene in a Casablanca café, Geoffrey Arlington had collapsed, apparently dead. He was certified to be dead, and would have been buried—except that a great Italian physician (a friend of Mrs. Muller's father) happened to be in Casablanca. He called to offer his sympathy. He examined Arlington's body. . . .

"And he became as one inspired! It was his subject—these obscure nervous diseases. He hurried back to his hotel, returned, and made an injection."

Mrs. Muller's strength was deserting her. As her voice failed, her accent became more marked. But she forced herself to go on.

"The dead man came to life. . . . God! That moment! Dr. Lombrosi made up a charge of this injection. It had to be renewed every three months. He gave it into my keeping. He knew I would never be far away from Geoffrey."

But it was Arlington who employed Silverston, an expert who invented illusions for stage magicians, to make the gold case. No one but he, or Mrs. Muller, could open it.

"One more question," McGraw asked. "What is your first name?"

"Delilah."

"No other?"

"To Geoff I was always—Lala. . . ."

It was Storm Kennedy who caught her as she toppled forward and slipped from her chair. . . .

Kennedy awoke late on the following morning and tried to remember what had made him so miserable. The explanation came swiftly; a stab of pain.

Hilary had left Hangover House without a word of farewell.

When he got back to London, Kennedy had called Miss Elphinstowe's number. No reply. He had rung again, up to midnight, at half hour intervals. No reply.

He groaned, and wondered why he had a headache; then recalled how much whisky he had drunk before finally going to sleep. Clearly, he had offended her. It was just as well. There was some deep secret in that outwardly sparkling life. Hilary knew that he was aware of this—and had no intention of disclosing it to him.

Kennedy was sorry for Mrs. Muller. But, in McGraw's opinion, the Public Prosecutor would make no charge against her. Geoffrey Arlington had not died of the wound; he had died as the result of an attack of angina pectoris, probably induced by violent anger. Catalepsy had supervened. Dr. Lombrosi's injection had restored him, temporarily, but could not restore the damaged heart. Mrs. Muller had acted in self-defence.

"I am advising the Assistant Commissioner to drop the prosecution," McGraw had told him.

Sergeant Whittaker, Kennedy's valet, entered carrying a tray.

"I didn't ring, Whittaker."

"No, sir. But I thought a cup of strong tea would be suitable. It is eleven fifteen—and Lord Glengale is here."

"Lord Glengale!"

Storm Kennedy came fully to life, swung his legs out of bed and groped for his slippers.

"Yes, sir. He instructs me to tell you that the matter is urgent. I will fill the bath tub."

Ten minutes later, Storm Kennedy walked into his office.

"Good morning, sir."

Lord Glengale glanced at his wrist-watch.

"You don't believe in early rising!"

His manner remained brusque as ever, but the steely eyes were not hard. Rather, their expression was speculative.

"I turned in rather late."

Lord Glengale stood watching him, analytically; then:

"You've done a good job," he announced. "I'm pleased with you. And now Hilary's bolting. D'you know who she's bolting from?"

"I can't imagine."

"You!"

"From *me*, sir?"

"That's what I said, if you were listening. Hilary's an easy looker and full of mettle. But she needs a strong hand on the curb. Do you want me to go on?"

"By all means."

Lord Glengale took an envelope from his pocket.

"She had seats on the Golden Arrow. She and Elfie are on it. There's something Hilary ought to tell you. She will, if you ask her. She told me. Is your passport in order?"

"Yes."

Lord Glengale glanced again at his watch.

"Then off with you. Never mind about money. I've given you a note to a friend in Paris who will look after you. You've just got time to catch that train."

Storm Kennedy wondered if he were yet really sober.

"But I haven't time to pack even a toothbrush and razor——"

"You've been a soldier, haven't you? Buy 'em in Paris."

Sergeant Whittaker opened the door.

"Your suitcase is ready, sir."

"Good man, that," said Lord Glengale.

The Golden Arrow pulled out of Victoria just twelve seconds after Storm Kennedy stepped on board. . . .

They were in the forward part of the same coach. Hilary wore a black and grey check travelling coat, a beret to match.

Elfie was attired in a blue suit with red facings, and a peaked cap, so that she looked like a postman.

When Storm Kennedy appeared in the doorway, Elfie stood up as suddenly as if a wasp had stung her.

"Thank God you made it, Bill!" She lurched towards him, grasped his hand.

"What's the number of your seat?" she asked.

"But, really, Elfie——"

"Shut up!" she whispered gruffly. "Engage the enemy more closely! Strike while the iron's hot." She glanced back. Hilary had been watching her.

"Hilary, I'm leaving you two to fight it out. Drinks on me when I come back."

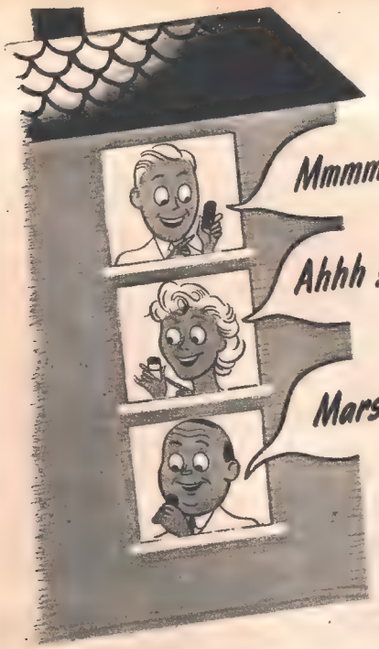
And she was gone, closing the door behind her.

THE END

"Hangover House," by Sax Rohmer, will be published in book form by Herbert Jenkins, Ltd.

THIS WEEK'S COVER

"As a child," says cover artist Grace Golden, "I hated pantomime. I did not think the funny men were very funny and their intrusion into the real story, which I enjoyed, filled me with disgust." She has grown out of that now and is a pantomime fan, as this picture of *Cinderella*, sketched in the theatre during a performance, shows. Two of Miss Golden's pictures have been bought by the Chantrey Bequest for the Tate Gallery but she is probably best known for her brightly coloured posters, which have been displayed throughout the country.


Mmmm! THICK COATING OF MILKY CHOCOLATE
Ahhh! RICH, BUTTERY-FLAVOURED CARAMEL LAYER
Mars! CENTRE OF CHOCOLATE MALTED-MILK LIGHTNING-WHIPPED IN WHITE OF EGG

"That's why I take the best part of our ration in Mars"

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MARS LTD., SLOUGH, BUCKS 4d. EACH 1/- BUYS 3

My Uncle Roland rightly thinks
The proper stuff for Christmas drinks
Is rum (Jamaica *Rum, of course*)
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SAILOR WHO RE-ENLISTED

Continued from page 8

navies of other nations buy a million Naval charts every year and pay about £200,000 for them. This is less than half the cost of running the hydrographic department, but sufficient to pay the salaries of 160 Naval captains.

The Fishery Protection Service, operated by a group of sloops and minesweepers from the Home Fleet, aims to prevent poaching by foreigners in British territorial waters, and to help fishing vessels in trouble.

Once it was looked on as a pleasant backwater job for less efficient officers and ratings, but these days there is always the possibility of international incidents resulting from any mistake by the F.P.S., so the men are kept on their toes.

Rôle In World Affairs

The rejuvenation of the F.P.S. is typical of the postwar Navy, which is a compact, highly scientific service with the emphasis on new ideas. The Navy which used to press-gang its crews now makes them pass entrance tests; the Navy which used to be the autocratic mistress of the seas is now sensitive of the delicate rôle it has to play in international affairs; the Navy which became the "silent service" largely because so many of its salty characters had nothing to say in civilized company now relies heavily on university-trained scientists.

Lord Hall, First Lord of the Admiralty, has called it "a new Royal Navy" and, indeed, it is so altered that the sailors of Emerson's time, or even the sailors of 1914, would scarcely recognize it.

When Geoff Sims rejoined, he had to face an interview with the depôt commander who sees all the men wanting to re-enlist and asks them "Why?" The only reply he refuses to accept is that hoary piece of sentiment, "Love of the sea."

The reasons he is given are many and varied. There are some with marital troubles (although not as many as might be expected), some who want to see the world, some who are restless and cannot settle down again to civilian life. But most of them are chaps like Geoff who have thought things out and see the Navy as a worthwhile career.

They are not unmindful, of course, of such incidental attractions as 400 cigarettes a month for 7s. 4d., and three leaves a year from home stations with free rail warrants. They like such privileges, but these are not sufficient to bribe them into the Service.

In the "new Royal Navy" Geoff was able to explain his ambitions to get on as an engineer, to contrast the opportunities between civilian life and Service life, and to tell the commander why he decided to go back.

"Our factory manager was well over seventy," Geoff told him, "and when he retired we all hoped to move up one. But what happened? His son came in from university and took the job, so we all stayed where we were.

"It might be thirty years before there's another chance like that, and by that time I suppose the old manager's grandson will be ready to take over. There's more chance for me here, sir. That's why I want to come back."

More To It Than Pay

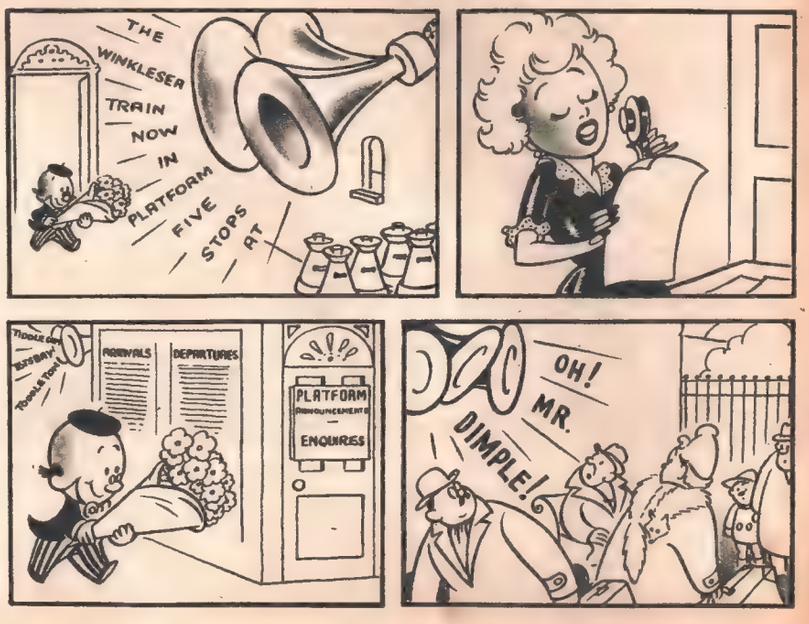
The commander made a note: "Ambitious type; sees the Navy as a career." Yet Emerson might have asked if this were the full story, and the commander with his long experience would have told him "no."

The Navy of today is "new" in a sense, yet the wonder of its appeal remains. Enlistment figures jumped when the *Amethyst* hit the headlines. There is a strange attraction which no talk of pounds, shillings and pence, or of chances of promotion can explain.

Men still want to be sailors for reasons which are as inexplicable to the commander and to Geoff Sims as they were to Emerson. But one thing is sure. So long as the Royal Navy has ships it will never be without crews.

***NEXT WEEK:** In a second article on the State of the Navy, Ian Bevan describes the shape of ships to come, and tells of the big rôle played by scientists*

MR. DIMPLE *by David Hand*



Riddle of Isatti

by OSCAR SCHISGALL

ILLUSTRATED BY SHOWELL

All day and every day, Papa Gialitti would sit on his balcony smoking, drinking. His seemed a useless life. Then, gradually, the news leaked out

He grinned and thumped a fist on his chest. "Me, I am your bank, *signor*. Papa Gialitti, Bank of Isatti"

IN 1926, WHEN WE WERE very young, my wife and I went to heaven, where I planned to write a book. Heaven, in our case, was the village of Isatti, in Italy—a day's carriage ride out of Florence. It was a sunny place, and its friendly farm people all looked happy. As far as I was able to discover, they had no concern beyond the state of their grapevines.

Politics? Mussolini? Nobody bothered about them, except to shrug when Il Duce was mentioned. For all its interest in the intrigues of the world, Isatti might have been on the moon. It was exactly the sort of retreat we wanted.

We took a room at the Pension Gialitti. It was surprisingly neat, but what really won us was the fact that Papa Gialitti, its picturesque old *proprietario*, could speak English. "I like English people very, very much," he said when we registered. To prove it, he sent flowers, grapes, and a bottle of wine to our room. My wife promptly fell in love with him.

"By the way," I said to him the first evening, when he came to our dinner table, "we'll have to cash travellers' cheques from time to time. And there's no bank in Isatti——"

"Me, I am your bank, *signor*," he said with a grin. He thumped a fist on his chest. "Papa Gialitti, Bank of Isatti."

We let it go at that.

OUR balcony looked out past a grove of cypress trees toward the rolling green slopes of the Apennines. Of course, my wife insisted on putting our table on the balcony, and there, in warm sunshine, I worked on the book for four months—to the constant puzzlement, I was sure, of Papa Gialitti. He usually sat in the garden under our window, smoking a long curved pipe and watching me.

I suppose he found it hard to believe anyone could have enough thoughts to fill so many sheets of paper.

But if I perplexed Papa Gialitti, he puzzled me, too.

He never worked. Even the affairs of the *pension* were left wholly to two fat servants. He simply sat in the garden hour after hour, smoking, occasionally sipping a glass of wine, and contemplating the birds. If a friend passed, he lifted a hand and called, "*Buon giorno!*" That was his only exercise.

Maybe I should have guessed, from such idleness, that he was the richest man in the mountains, with no need to work. But that was before I knew about his money. To me he seemed just lazy, a devotee of *dolce far niente*.

He was about sixty—a big-boned figure with a craggy face and keen grey eyes. His thick hair was white, his eyebrows were coal-black, and the contrast gave him a ferocious, piratical look. But that was misleading, for Papa Gialitti was the gentlest of men, as peaceful as the Etruscan sunshine in which he loved to doze. He invariably wore baggy brown corduroy trousers with a red sash about his waist, and sandals.

"If only I could paint!" my wife would sigh, looking at him from the window.

"Colourful," I said. "But I wonder what a man like that contributes to life."

She couldn't answer that.

We came to know the old man quite well and discovered that he was very proud of his London background. "My papa," he told us in the garden one Sunday afternoon, "he live in Soho. Many year. When he is young man."

"Why," my wife said, "then you're practically half Cockney!"

He bowed in his chair as if she had paid him a priceless compliment. "*Grazie, signora.*" He straightened, smiling.

"My papa come back to Italy with much English money. Oh, very, very much! Many thousand pound. He very rich man. Most rich man in Isatti."

We looked impressed.

"He marry Italian girl," Papa Gialitti said. "Buy *pension*. Me, I am born here. American and English people come to the *pension*, so I learn English. Is good life." He leaned back, enjoying the memories. "Every year we travel—San Remo, Monte Carlo, Biarritz—oh, every place!" He chuckled. "*Si*, is very good life. Then, when I am young man, I go live in Roma. Marry. Have children. Eighteen year ago my papa die. Leave me everything. So I come back to be *proprietario* of the *pension*."

He had been welcomed, we gathered, with all the deference due the scion of the Gialittis. To be the richest man in the village meant to be honoured by all. That, according to his account, must have been the climax of his career, for since then not much seemed to have happened to Papa Gialitti. His own wife had died a dozen years ago, and his two married daughters were comfortably established in Rome.

Now, content, with everything in order, he intended to live out his life right here in his garden, with a good pipe in one hand and a glass of good wine in the other.

It sounded idyllic, but I felt a bit cynical about the whole thing.

To me such an existence seemed dull, wasted and unproductive. The old man might have achieved peace. But it struck me as a negative do-nothing kind of peace.

AND I didn't begin to realize the truth about Papa Gialitti for some time—not until my wife, browsing around the village, came back with some startling stories.

"You know the big winery up on the hill?" she said. It was a low fieldstone building you could see from the village square. "Papa Gialitti made the town put it up. He backed it with his money. Years ago."

"Go on!" I said.

"In the old days the folks around here used to sell their grapes to wine merchants in Florence. Papa Gialitti called a group of local people into his garden one day and urged them to build their own winery. He guaranteed to make up any loss out of his own pocket. So they built it, and it's been a profitable thing ever since."

"You make him sound," I said, "like the patron of the town."

"Oh, he is! Definitely. Later he got them to build new houses for the wine workers, too—guaranteed to pay the loss on the places if there was any. But there wasn't any loss. All the houses were taken at good prices. And another year he got some fellow to put up the village cinema—on the same basis of a guarantee against loss. Now Isatti has pictures twice a week, and everybody's happy about it, and the theatre pays very nicely."

Day after day my wife continued her inquiries. And it became clear, to my

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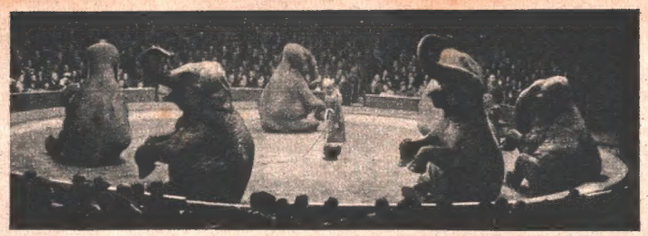
OUR next gathering of *Bullets* prize-winners in London will be at JOHN BULL's New Year celebration party—and these elephants, at Bertram Mills circus, will be one of the sights our week-end visitors will never forget. Chief winners in this week's fine offer will receive with their cheques a double invitation to join the party. Use your coupon to enter this week's best *Bullet* and the last prize telegram of 1949 will name you winner of £500 and a grand New Year celebration in London for two.



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2. Editor undertakes that all *Bullets* received shall be accorded careful consideration by competent Adjudicators.

3. As entry-fee, enclose P.O. or stamps as indicated on coupon. Fee submitted will be taken to cover *Bullets* in coupon order—any sent in excess will be disqualified. Plain-paper entries are allowed. If using P.O. make payable to JOHN BULL, cross /& Co./, write name and address on back. Coupons must not be mutilated. Forces half-rate for *Bullets* and Crosswords for entry-fees not exceeding 2s. if coupons personally completed and Service rank indicated.

4. Entries accepted by post only and on condition that results of this week's Contests in JOHN BULL dated January 14, also Editor's decision in any matter of dispute, are accepted as final and legally binding. Odhams employees (and families) ineligible.

"Bullets" Winners 1,706

FIRST PRIZE, £500 plus Christmas Turkey: F. T. E. Attwood, 71 Halesowen Road, Morden, Surrey: "I WANT MY SATURDAYS!" THREATENS OUR *Everyday* WANTS

SECOND PRIZE, £50 plus Christmas Turkey: K. J. Burn, 1 Epworth Villas, Duffield Road, Derby: SHOCK FOR THE NATION—"TO LET," AFTER *Hamlet*!

THIRD PRIZE, £25 plus Christmas Turkey: C. T. Stephens, 8 Keynsham Road, Whitchurch, Glamorgan: PARENTHOOD—MANY PONDER—ANY WONDER?

OTHER AWARDS: £20: C. E. Griffin, West Ashton, Trowbridge: PARENTHOOD—"ANCHORED" ME—*Widened* "HORIZON." £15: Mrs. E. L. M. Warne, 17 Fulwell Park Avenue, Twickenham: TO SURVIVE—AUSTERITY'S WINTER, *No* "LAGGING"! £10: A. J. Rice, 148 Nutbeem Road, Eastleigh: PUT IN THE FREEZER—WITH DOOR OPEN, WAGES. £9: W. T. Yates, 3 Dorothy Grove, Twist Lane, Leigh: "I WANT MY STUD!"—MY *Other* BABY HOWLING! £8: Rev. R. I. Mitchell, West Manse, Haddington, E. Lothian: MORE LIKE IT—IF MORE LIKE TITO. £7: R. Carmichael, 75 Somerville Drive, Glasgow, S.2: PRICE WE PAY—COCKEYED, WHILE CLOCKS EYED. £6: W. J. Murphy, 26 Castle Street, Maesteg: "I WANT MY GLASSES!"—GRANDPA SHOUTED AT—*Dentist*!

Above 7 winners each also receives Christmas Turkey.

For 5 winners of £5 plus Turkey, and 5 of £2 10s. plus Turkey, see last week's *"Bullets" Bulletin*.

Winners of 25 further Turkeys and 100 Fowls have been notified and 3,000 "Good Shots" posted.

XWORD 658 RESULT

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The 1950 Picture	Moonshine
Family Of Nations	Bottled Up
Sheathe The Sword And	Load Off His Mind
Those Russians	Not So Bad
If We Play Our Part	Getting Cantankerous
Warm Corner	
Man Proposes, But	**Incomplete "Examples"—see instructions**
Desperate	
Hoping And Praying	Something In The.....
The Bright Lights	Why Sonny's.....
Your Cold	"Curse That.....!"
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Across Clues XWORD 663

1. These sometimes result in grave losses to people
5. Nervous person might well be upset by angry one
6. As a man gets older, his age will almost certainly be shown by his
8. There's quite often a certain amount of this in tube
12. Does no good at all in some fields
13. Father may be excused expressing annoyance when there is no ink in his
14. Fields lying low are almost bound to become this in winter

Down Clues

1. Goes up and down
2. May prove a very welcome lift to a man
3. It's surprising how many people stick to the same old one time after time
4. Many a church still gives us a great this of bell-ringing
7. It's natural to turn on one sometimes
9. To continue doing this without a break is not very easy
10. Won't be so effective if stretched a lot
11. What most beggars are sadly in need of

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Single Square with 6d. P.O. or stamps, covers dispatch to you of *Crossword Gazette* dated January 7.

Winner—sender of most meritorious set of Answers received—decided by Adjudication Committee on basis of aptness and accuracy. Ties divide. Entrants limited to one prize per Contest and to entry requiring not more than 4s. entry-fee. Signature below is agreement to Rules.

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663 Closing Postmark MON., DEC. 19

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RIDDLE OF ISATTI

Continued from previous page

bewilderment, that I'd have to revise my estimate of the old man in the garden.

In the past few years, it seemed, Papa Gialitti had practically revivified Isatti. Just sitting in the sun, talking to people, he had been responsible for the building of new stores, for laying the pipeline that had brought a fresh supply of water out of the hills, for a dozen other improvements. Papa, it appeared, was willing to underwrite any project which promised to bring the people of Isatti prosperity and happiness. He had all but produced a new village.

I found myself looking at him with new respect. But it was our last night at the *pension* before we could get Papa Gialitti himself to talk about these things.

By that time we were good friends. Of all the guests who had come and gone, we had remained his favourites. He liked to visit our moonlit balcony in the evenings to share a bottle of wine with us, his big, red-sashed figure sprawling in a chair. Usually we spoke about our life in England. To-night, however, I told him how deeply impressed we were with everything he had done for Isatti.

He smiled at that, looking at his glass.

Then he explained why he had done it.

HE said: "When I become *proprietario* of the *pension*, is no business. Nobody comes to Isatti. I ask myself—who will fill big *pension* in Isatti if the village is not pretty? Who will come to dead town? So I tell my friends to build this and build that. Make the village nice. I give my word to take care of losses. Everybody knows my word is good. So everybody build new things. Everybody is happy. We make good village. By and by plenty people come to see."

My respect grew stronger. Whatever his motives had been, Papa Gialitti had made himself the Bank of Isatti, the repository of all basic wealth, the ultimate guarantee of the town's financial integrity. What if he did spend his days dozing in the garden? The village itself, and its spirit, were a monument to his enterprise.

My wife said thoughtfully: "I wonder if these people know how much they owe you, Papa. After all, what you've done is make your wealth their wealth."

Papa Gialitti smiled at her across the top of his glass. He said:

"*Signora*, tomorrow you go away. So I tell you something. My papa lose all his money in casinos at San Remo, Monte Carlo, Biarritz. He leave no money at all—only the *pension*. Me, I am never rich man. But as long as people in Isatti do not know this—as long they *think* I have much money in Florence banks—" He shrugged. "What difference it make?"

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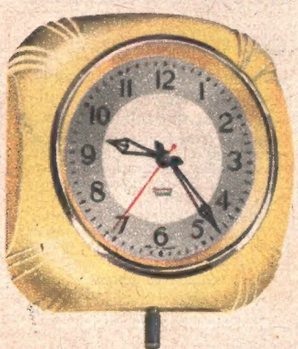

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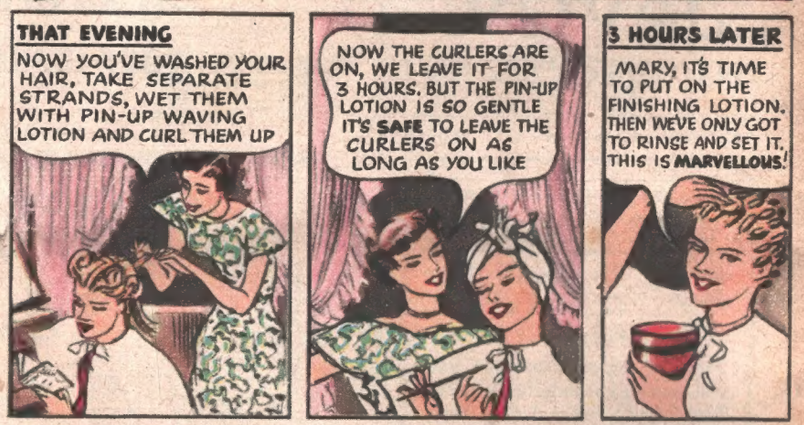
"They couldn't believe I'd done it myself!"

MISS JACQUELINE LETHBRIDGE
(TOP-RANKING MANNEQUIN)
—tells how she gave herself a perfect perm with Pin-Up

MARY! A DRESS SHOW TOMORROW! AND LOOK AT MY HAIR AFTER ALL THIS BATHING! —I CAN'T FIT IN A PERM NOW!
YES, YOU CAN! GIVE YOURSELF A PIN-UP HOME PERM TONIGHT. I'LL HELP!


THAT EVENING
NOW YOU'VE WASHED YOUR HAIR, TAKE SEPARATE STRANDS, WET THEM WITH PIN-UP WAVING LOTION AND CURL THEM UP
NOW THE CURLERS ARE ON, WE LEAVE IT FOR 3 HOURS. BUT THE PIN-UP LOTION IS SO GENTLE IT'S SAFE TO LEAVE THE CURLERS ON AS LONG AS YOU LIKE
3 HOURS LATER
MARY, IT'S TIME TO PUT ON THE FINISHING LOTION. THEN WE'VE ONLY GOT TO RINSE AND SET IT. THIS IS MARVELLOUS!

"I'm thrilled with my Pin-Up. To be able to perm my hair in my own time—why, it's marvellous! It's easy as anything to do, and looks natural and glossy right from the start."

That's what sophisticated, honey-blonde Jacqueline Lethbridge says! It's what thousands of women are saying. The marvellous thing about Pin-Up is that it's so gentle, it is safe to leave the lotion on all night. You *must* have a Pin-Up Home Perm before Christmas! A complete outfit costs 15/- (with plastic curlers you can use again and again) then for future perms all you need is a refill costing only 7/6.

New! The 5/- Junior-Size Pin-Up! For the loveliest end curls, kiss curls, or half-head perm.

YOU, TOO, CAN BE A PERMANENT Pin-Up GIRL!

PIN 29A-76